This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

James Lenox.

Sum

ADAM SMITH LL.D.

From a Model by Tassie.

Drawn by J. Jackson Engraved by [illegible]

Published Nov. 25, 1811, by Cadell and Davies, London.

THE

WORKS

OF

ADAM SMITH, LL.D.

AND F.R.S. OF LONDON AND EDINBURGH:

ONE OF THE COMMISSIONERS OF HIS MAJESTY'S CUSTOMS IN SCOTLAND;

AND FORMERLY PROFESSOR OF MORAL PHILOSOPHY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW.

WITH AN ACCOUNT OF

HIS LIFE AND WRITINGS:

BY DUGALD STEWART,

PROFESSOR OF MORAL PHILOSOPHY IN THE UNIVERSITY, AND FELLOW OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY, OF EDINBURGH, &c. &c. &c.

IN FIVE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR T. CADELL AND W. DAVIES; F. C. AND J. RIVINGTON; OTRIDGE AND SON; F. WINGRAVE; LONGMAN, HURST, REES, ORME, AND BROWN; JOHN RICHARDSON; J. BOOKER; B. CROSBY; E. JEFFERY; W. STEWART; BLACK, PARRY, AND KINGSBURY; S. BAGSTER; J. MAWMAN; J. ASPERNE; AND R. SCHOLEY: AND W. CREECH, AND BELL AND BRADFUTE, AT EDINBURGH.

1812.

LENOX LIBRARY
NEW YORK

Strahan and Preston,
Printers-Street, London.

CONTENTS

OF

THE FIRST VOLUME.

THE THEORY OF MORAL SENTIMENTS.

PART I.

OF THE PROPRIETY OF ACTIONS.

SECT. I.

OF the Sense of Propriety - Page 1

CHAP. I. *Of* SYMPATHY - - ibid.
CHAP. II. *Of the Pleasure of mutual Sympathy* 10
CHAP. III. *Of the manner in which we judge of the propriety or impropriety of the Affections of other Men, by their concord or dissonance with our own* - 16
CHAP. IV. *The same subject continued* - - 21
CHAP. V. *Of the amiable and respectable virtues* 30

SECT. II.

Of the Degrees of the different Passions which are consistent with Propriety - - 36

INTRODUCTION - - - - ibid.
CHAP. I. *Of the Passions which take their origin from the body* - - - - 37

CHAP. II. *Of those Passions which take their origin from a particular turn or habit of the Imagination* Page 44
CHAP. III. *Of the unsocial Passions* - - 50
CHAP. IV. *Of the social Passions* - - 9
CHAP. V. *Of the selfish Passions* - - 62

SECT. III.

Of the Effects of Prosperity and Adversity upon the Judgment of Mankind with regard to the Propriety of Action; and why it is more easy to obtain their Approbation in the one state than in the other - 69

CHAP. I. *That though our sympathy with sorrow is generally a more lively sensation than our sympathy with joy, it commonly falls much more short of the violence of what is naturally felt by the person principally concerned* ibid.
CHAP. II. *Of the origin of Ambition, and of the distinction of Ranks* - - - 80
CHAP. III. *Of the corruption of our moral sentiments, which is occasioned by this disposition to admire the rich and the great, and to despise or neglect persons of poor and mean condition* - - - 98

PART II.

OF MERIT AND DEMERIT; OR, OF THE OBJECTS OF REWARD AND PUNISHMENT.

SECT. I.

Of the Sense of Merit and Demerit - 108
INTRODUCTION - - - - ibid.
CHAP. I. *That whatever appears to be the proper object of gratitude, appears to deserve reward; and that,*

in

in the same manner, whatever appears to be the proper object of resentment, appears to deserve punishment Page 110
CHAP. II. *Of the proper objects of gratitude and resentment* - - - - 113
CHAP. III. *That where there is no approbation of the conduct of the person who confers the benefit, there is little sympathy with the gratitude of him who receives it: and that, on the contrary, where there is no disapprobation of the motives of the person who does the mischief, there is no sort of sympathy with the resentment of him who suffers it* - - - 118
CHAP. IV. *Recapitulation of the foregoing Chapters* 121
CHAP. V. *The Analysis of the Sense of Merit and Demerit* - - - - 123

SECT. II.

Of Justice and Beneficence.

CHAP. I. *Comparison of those two virtues* - 131
CHAP. II. *Of the sense of Justice, of Remorse, and of the consciousness of Merit* - - 139
CHAP. III. *Of the utility of this constitution of Nature* 145

SECT. III.

Of the Influence of Fortune upon the Sentiments of Mankind, with regard to the Merit or Demerit of Actions - 157
INTRODUCTION - - - - ibid.
CHAP. I. *Of the causes of this Influence of Fortune* 160
CHAP. II. *Of the extent of this Influence of Fortune* 166
CHAP. III. *Of the final cause of this Irregularity of Sentiments.* - - - - 181

PART III.

OF THE FOUNDATION OF OUR JUDGMENTS CONCERNING OUR OWN SENTIMENTS AND CONDUCT, AND OF THE SENSE OF DUTY.

CHAP. I. *Of the Principle of Self-approbation and of Self-disapprobation* - - - Page 188
CHAP. II. *Of the love of Praise, and of that of Praiseworthiness; and of the dread of Blame, and of that of Blame-worthiness* - - - 194
CHAP. III. *Of the Influence and Authority of Conscience* - - - - 227
CHAP. IV. *Of the Nature of Self-deceit, and of the Origin and Use of general Rules* - - 266
CHAP. V. *Of the Influence and Authority of the general Rules of Morality, and that they are justly regarded as the Laws of the Deity* - - 275
CHAP. VI. *In what cases the Sense of Duty ought to be the sole principle of our conduct; and in what cases it ought to concur with other motives* - - 293

PART IV.

OF THE EFFECT OF UTILITY UPON THE SENTIMENT OF APPROBATION.

CHAP. I. *Of the beauty which the appearance of* UTILITY *bestows upon all the productions of Art, and of the extensive influence of this species of Beauty* 308
CHAP. II. *Of the beauty which the appearance of Utility bestows upon the characters and actions of men; and how far the perception of this beauty may be regarded as one of the original principles of Approbation* 323

PART

PART V.

OF THE INFLUENCE OF CUSTOM AND FASHION UPON THE SENTIMENTS OF MORAL APPROBATION AND DISAPPROBATION.

CHAP. I. *Of the Influence of Custom and Fashion upon our notions of Beauty and Deformity* - Page 335

CHAP. II. *Of the Influence of Custom and Fashion upon Moral Sentiments* - - - 347

PART VI.

OF THE CHARACTER OF VIRTUE.

INTRODUCTION - - - 369

SECT. I.

Of the Character of the Individual, so far as it affects his own Happiness; or of Prudence - - - - ibid.

SECT. II.

Of the Character of the Individual, so far as it can affect the Happiness of other People 381

INTRODUCTION - - - - - - ibid.

CHAP. I. *Of the Order in which Individuals are recommended by Nature to our Care and Attention* 382

CHAP. II. *Of the Order in which Societies are by Nature recommended to our Beneficence* - 399

CHAP. III. *Of universal Benevolence* - - 412

SECT. III.

Of Self-command - - - - Page 418
CONCLUSION OF THE SIXTH PART - - 464

PART VII.

OF SYSTEMS OF MORAL PHILOSOPHY.

SECT. I.

Of the Questions which ought to be examined in a Theory of Moral Sentiments - 469

SECT. II.

Of the different Accounts which have been given of the Nature of Virtue - - 473
INTRODUCTION - - - - - ibid.
CHAP. I. *Of those Systems which make Virtue consist in Propriety* - - - - 473
CHAP. II. *Of those Systems which make Virtue consist in Prudence* - - - - 519
CHAP. III. *Of those Systems which make Virtue consist in Benevolence* - - - - 530
CHAP. IV. *Of licentious Systems* - - 542

SECT. III.

Of the different Systems which have been formed concerning the Principle of Approbation 558
INTRODUCTION - - - - ibid.
CHAP. I. *Of those Systems which deduce the Principle of Approbation from Self-love* - - 559

CHAP.

CHAP. II. *Of those Systems which make Reason the Principle of Approbation* - - Page 564
CHAP. III. *Of those Systems which make Sentiment the Principle of Approbation* - - - 570

SECT. IV.

Of the Manner in which different Authors have treated of the practical Rules of Morality 583

THE

THEORY

OF

MORAL SENTIMENTS.

ADVERTISEMENT.

TO

THE SIXTH EDITION.

SINCE the firſt publication of the THEORY OF MORAL SENTIMENTS, which was ſo long ago as the beginning of the year 1759, ſeveral corrections, and a good many illuſtrations of the doctrines contained in it, have occurred to me. But the various occupations in which the different accidents of my life neceſſarily involved me, have till now prevented me from reviſing this work with the care and attention which I always intended. The reader will find the principal alterations which I have made in this New Edition, in the laſt Chapter of the third Section of Part Firſt; and in the four firſt Chapters of Part Third. Part Sixth, as it ſtands in this New Edition, is altogether new. In Part Seventh, I have brought together the greater part of the different paſſages concerning the Stoical Philoſophy, which, in the former Editions, had been ſcattered about in different parts of the work. I have likewiſe endeavoured to explain more fully, and examine more diſtinctly, ſome of the doctrines of that

famous ſect. In the fourth and laſt Section of the ſame Part, I have thrown together a few additional obſervations concerning the duty and principle of veracity. There are, beſides, in other parts of the work, a few other alterations and corrections of no great moment.

In the laſt paragraph of the firſt Edition of the preſent work, I ſaid, that I ſhould in another diſcourſe endeavour to give an account of the general principles of law and government, and of the different revolutions which they had undergone in the different ages and periods of ſociety; not only in what concerns juſtice, but in what concerns police, revenue, and arms, and whatever elſe is the object of law. In the *Enquiry concerning the Nature and Cauſes of the Wealth of Nations*, I have partly executed this promiſe; at leaſt ſo far as concerns police, revenue, and arms. What remains, the theory of juriſprudence, which I have long projected, I have hitherto been hindered from executing, by the ſame occupations which had till now prevented me from reviſing the preſent work. Though my very advanced age leaves me, I acknowledge, very little expectation of ever being able to exe-

cute this great work to my own ſatisfaction; yet, as I have not altogether abandoned the deſign, and as I wiſh ſtill to continue under the obligation of doing what I can, I have allowed the paragraph to remain as it was publiſhed more than thirty years ago, when I entertained no doubt of being able to execute every thing which it announced.

THE

THE

THEORY

OF

MORAL SENTIMENTS.

PART I.

Of the Propriety of Action.

Consisting of Three Sections.

SECTION I.

OF THE SENSE OF PROPRIETY.

CHAP. I.

Of Sympathy.

PART I. SECT. I.

HOW selfish soever man may be supposed, there are evidently some principles in his nature, which interest him in the fortune of others, and render their happiness necessary to him, though he derives nothing from it except the pleasure of seeing it. Of this kind is pity or compassion, the emotion which we feel for the misery of others, when we either see it, or are made to conceive it in a very

 lively

PART I. lively manner. That we often derive ſorrow from the ſorrow of others, is a matter of fact too obvious to require any inſtances to prove it; for this ſentiment, like all the other original paſſions of human nature, is by no means confined to the virtuous and humane, though they perhaps may feel it with the moſt exquiſite ſenſibility. The greateſt ruffian, the moſt hardened violator of the laws of ſociety, is not altogether without it.

As we have no immediate experience of what other men feel, we can form no idea of the manner in which they are affected, but by conceiving what we ourſelves ſhould feel in the like ſituation. Though our brother is upon the rack, as long as we ourſelves are at our eaſe, our ſenſes will never inform us of what he ſuffers. They never did, and never can, carry us beyond our own perſon, and it is by the imagination only that we can form any conception of what are his ſenſations. Neither can that faculty help us to this any other way, than by repreſenting to us what would be our own, if we were in his caſe. It is the impreſſions of our own ſenſes only, not thoſe of his, which our imaginations copy. By the imagination we place ourſelves in his ſituation, we conceive ourſelves enduring all the ſame torments, we enter as it were into his body, and become in ſome meaſure the ſame perſon with him, and thence form ſome idea of his ſenſations, and even feel ſomething which, though weaker in degree, is not altogether unlike them. His agonies, when they are thus brought

brought home to ourſelves, when we have thus adopted and made them our own, begin at laſt to affect us, and we then tremble and ſhudder at the thought of what he feels. For as to be in pain or diſtreſs of any kind excites the moſt exceſſive ſorrow, ſo to conceive or to imagine that we are in it, excites ſome degree of the ſame emotion, in proportion to the vivacity or dullneſs of the conception.

That this is the ſource of our fellow-feeling for the miſery of others, that it is by changing places in fancy with the ſufferer, that we come either to conceive or to be affected by what he feels, may be demonſtrated by many obvious obſervations, if it ſhould not be thought ſufficiently evident of itſelf. When we ſee a ſtroke aimed and juſt ready to fall upon the leg or arm of another perſon, we naturally ſhrink and draw back our own leg or our own arm; and when it does fall, we feel it in ſome meaſure, and are hurt by it as well as the ſufferer. The mob, when they are gazing at a dancer on the ſlack rope, naturally writhe and twiſt and balance their own bodies, as they ſee him do, and as they feel that they themſelves muſt do if in his ſituation. Perſons of delicate fibres and a weak conſtitution of body complain, that in looking on the ſores and ulcers which are expoſed by beggars in the ſtreets, they are apt to feel an itching or uneaſy ſenſation in the correſpondent part of their own bodies. The horror which they conceive at the miſery of thoſe wretches affects that particular part in themſelves more than any

 other;

PART I. other; becauſe that horror ariſes from conceiving what they themſelves would ſuffer, if they really were the wretches whom they are looking upon, and if that particular part in themſelves was actually affected in the ſame miſerable manner. The very force of this conception is ſufficient, in their feeble frames, to produce that itching or uneaſy ſenſation complained of. Men of the moſt robuſt make, obſerve that in looking upon ſore eyes they often feel a very ſenſible foreneſs in their own, which proceeds from the ſame reaſon; that organ being in the ſtrongeſt man more delicate, than any other part of the body is in the weakeſt.

Neither is it thoſe circumſtances only, which create pain or ſorrow, that call forth our fellow-feeling. Whatever is the paſſion which ariſes from any object in the perſon principally concerned, an analogous emotion ſprings up, at the thought of his ſituation, in the breaſt of every attentive ſpectator. Our joy for the deliverance of thoſe heroes of tragedy or romance who intereſt us, is as ſincere as our grief for their diſtreſs, and our fellow-feeling with their miſery is not more real than that with their happineſs. We enter into their gratitude towards thoſe faithful friends who did not deſert them in their difficulties; and we heartily go along with their reſentment againſt thoſe perfidious traitors who injured, abandoned, or deceived them. In every paſſion of which the mind of man is ſuſceptible, the emotions of the by-ſtander always correſpond to what, by bringing the caſe home

to

to himſelf, he imagines ſhould be the ſentiments of the ſufferer. SECT. I.

Pity and compaſſion are words appropriated to ſignify our fellow-feeling with the ſorrow of others. Sympathy, though its meaning was, perhaps, originally the ſame, may now, however, without much impropriety, be made uſe of to denote our fellow-feeling with any paſſion whatever.

Upon ſome occaſions ſympathy may ſeem to ariſe merely from the view of a certain emotion in another perſon. The paſſions, upon ſome occaſions, may ſeem to be transfuſed from one man to another, inſtantaneouſly, and antecedent to any knowledge of what excited them in the perſon principally concerned. Grief and joy, for example, ſtrongly expreſſed in the look and geſtures of any one, at once affect the ſpectator with ſome degree of a like painful or agreeable emotion. A ſmiling face is, to everybody that ſees it, a cheerful object; as a ſorrowful countenance, on the other hand, is a melancholy one.

This, however, does not hold univerſally, or with regard to every paſſion. There are ſome paſſions of which the expreſſions excite no ſort of ſympathy, but before we are acquainted with what gave occaſion to them, ſerve rather to diſguſt and provoke us againſt them. The furious behaviour of an angry man is more likely to exaſperate us againſt himſelf than againſt his enemies. As we are unacquainted with his provocation, we cannot bring his caſe home to our-

PART I. ſelves, nor conceive any thing like the paſſions which it excites. But we plainly ſee what is the ſituation of thoſe with whom he is angry, and to what violence they may be expoſed from ſo enraged an adverſary. We readily, therefore, ſympathize with their fear or reſentment, and are immediately diſpoſed to take part againſt the man from whom they appear to be in ſo much danger.

If the very appearances of grief and joy inſpire us with ſome degree of the like emotions, it is becauſe they ſuggeſt to us the general idea of ſome good or bad fortune that has befallen the perſon in whom we obſerve them: and in theſe paſſions this is ſufficient to have ſome little influence upon us. The effects of grief and joy terminate in the perſon who feels thoſe emotions, of which the expreſſions do not, like thoſe of reſentment, ſuggeſt to us the idea of any other perſon for whom we are concerned, and whoſe intereſts are oppoſite to his. The general idea of good or bad fortune, therefore, creates ſome concern for the perſon who has met with it, but the general idea of provocation excites no ſympathy with the anger of the man who has received it. Nature, it ſeems, teaches us to be more averſe to enter into this paſſion, and, till informed of its cauſe, to be diſpoſed rather to take part againſt it.

Even our ſympathy with the grief or joy of another, before we are informed of the cauſe of either, is always extremely imperfect. General lamentations, which expreſs nothing but the anguiſh

anguish of the sufferer, create rather a curiosity to inquire into his situation, along with some disposition to sympathize with him, than any actual sympathy that is very sensible. The first question which we ask is, What has befallen you? Till this be answered, though we are uneasy both from the vague idea of his misfortune, and still more from torturing ourselves with conjectures about what it may be, yet our fellow-feeling is not very considerable.

Sympathy, therefore, does not arise so much from the view of the passion, as from that of the situation which excites it. We sometimes feel for another, a passion of which he himself seems to be altogether incapable; because, when we put ourselves in his case, that passion arises in our breast from the imagination, though it does not in his from the reality. We blush for the impudence and rudeness of another, though he himself appears to have no sense of the impropriety of his own behaviour; because we cannot help feeling with what confusion we ourselves should be covered, had we behaved in so absurd a manner.

Of all the calamities to which the condition of mortality exposes mankind, the loss of reason appears, to those who have the least spark of humanity, by far the most dreadful, and they behold that last stage of human wretchedness, with deeper commiseration than any other. But the poor wretch, who is in it, laughs and sings perhaps, and is altogether insensible of his own misery. The anguish which humanity feels,

PART I. therefore, at the ſight of ſuch an object cannot be the reflection of any ſentiment of the ſufferer. The compaſſion of the ſpectator muſt ariſe altogether from the conſideration of what he himſelf would feel, if he was reduced to the ſame unhappy ſituation, and, what perhaps is impoſſible, was at the ſame time able to regard it with his preſent reaſon and judgment.

What are the pangs of a mother, when ſhe hears the moanings of her infant that during the agony of diſeaſe cannot expreſs what it feels? In her idea of what it ſuffers, ſhe joins, to its real helpleſſneſs, her own conſciouſneſs of that helpleſſneſs, and her own terrors for the unknown conſequences of its diſorder; and out of all theſe, forms, for her own ſorrow, the moſt complete image of miſery and diſtreſs. The infant, however, feels only the uneaſineſs of the preſent inſtant, which can never be great. With regard to the future, it is perfectly ſecure, and in its thoughtleſſneſs and want of foreſight, poſſeſſes an antidote againſt fear and anxiety, the great tormentors of the human breaſt, from which, reaſon and philoſophy will, in vain, attempt to defend it when it grows up to a man.

We ſympathize even with the dead, and overlooking what is of real importance in their ſituation, that awful futurity which awaits them, we are chiefly affected by thoſe circumſtances which ſtrike our ſenſes, but can have no influence upon their happineſs. It is miſerable, we think, to be deprived of the light of the ſun; to be

ſhut

shut out from life and converſation; to be laid in the cold grave, a prey to corruption and the reptiles of the earth; to be no more thought of in this world, but to be obliterated, in a little time, from the affections, and almoſt from the memory, of their dearest friends and relations. Surely, we imagine, we can never feel too much for thoſe who have ſuffered ſo dreadful a calamity. The tribute of our fellow-feeling ſeems doubly due to them now, when they are in danger of being forgot by every body; and, by the vain honours which we pay to their memory, we endeavour, for our own miſery, artificially to keep alive our melancholy remembrance of their misfortune. That our ſympathy can afford them no conſolation ſeems to be an addition to their calamity; and to think that all we can do is unavailing, and that, what alleviates all other diſtreſs, the regret, the love, and the lamentations of their friends, can yield no comfort to them, ſerves only to exaſperate our ſenſe of their miſery. The happineſs of the dead, however, moſt aſſuredly, is affected by none of theſe circumſtances; nor is it the thought of theſe things which can ever diſturb the profound ſecurity of their repoſe. The idea of that dreary and endleſs melancholy, which the fancy naturally aſcribes to their condition, ariſes altogether from our joining to the change which has been produced upon them, our own conſciouſneſs of that change, from our putting ourſelves in their ſituation, and from our lodging, if I may be allowed to ſay ſo, our own living

SECT. I.

PART I. ing ſouls in their inanimated bodies, and thence conceiving what would be our emotions in this caſe. It is from this very illuſion of the imagination, that the foreſight of our own diſſolution is ſo terrible to us, and that the idea of thoſe circumſtances, which undoubtedly can give us no pain when we are dead, makes us miſerable while we are alive. And from thence ariſes one of the moſt important principles in human nature, the dread of death, the great poiſon to the happineſs, but the great reſtraint upon the injuſtice of mankind, which, while it afflicts and mortifies the individual, guards and protects the ſociety.

CHAP. II.

Of the Pleaſure of mutual Sympathy.

BUT whatever may be the cauſe of ſympathy, or however it may be excited, nothing pleaſes us more than to obſerve in other men a fellow-feeling with all the emotions of our own breaſt; nor are we ever ſo much ſhocked as by the appearance of the contrary. Thoſe who are fond of deducing all our ſentiments from certain refinements of ſelf-love, think themſelves at no loſs to account, according to their own principles, both for this pleaſure and this pain. Man, ſay they, conſcious of his own weakneſs, and

and of the need which he has for the assistance of others, rejoices whenever he observes that they adopt his own passions, because he is then assured of that assistance; and grieves whenever he observes the contrary, because he is then assured of their opposition. But both the pleasure and the pain are always felt so instantaneously, and often upon such frivolous occasions, that it seems evident that neither of them can be derived from any such self-interested consideration. A man is mortified when, after having endeavoured to divert the company, he looks round and sees that nobody laughs at his jests but himself. On the contrary, the mirth of the company is highly agreeable to him, and he regards this correspondence of their sentiments with his own as the greatest applause.

SECT. I.

Neither does his pleasure seem to arise altogether from the additional vivacity which his mirth may receive from sympathy with theirs, nor his pain from the disappointment he meets with when he misses this pleasure; though both the one and the other, no doubt, do in some measure. When we have read a book or poem so often that we can no longer find any amusement in reading it by ourselves, we can still take pleasure in reading it to a companion. To him it has all the graces of novelty; we enter into the surprise and admiration which it naturally excites in him, but which it is no longer capable of exciting in us; we consider all the ideas which it presents rather in the light in which they

PART I. they appear to him, than in that in which they appear to ourſelves, and we are amuſed by ſympathy with his amuſement which thus enlivens our own. On the contrary, we ſhould be vexed if he did not ſeem to be entertained with it, and we could no longer take any pleaſure in reading it to him. It is the ſame caſe here. The mirth of the company, no doubt, enlivens our own mirth, and their ſilence, no doubt, diſappoints us. But though this may contribute both to the pleaſure which we derive from the one, and to the pain which we feel from the other, it is by no means the ſole cauſe of either; and this correſpondence of the ſentiments of others with our own appears to be a cauſe of pleaſure, and the want of it a cauſe of pain, which cannot be accounted for in this manner. The ſympathy, which my friends expreſs with my joy, might, indeed, give me pleaſure by enlivening that joy: but that which they expreſs with my grief could give me none, if it ſerved only to enliven that grief. Sympathy, however, enlivens joy and alleviates grief. It enlivens joy by preſenting another ſource of ſatisfaction; and it alleviates grief by inſinuating into the heart almoſt the only agreeable ſenſation which it is at that time capable of receiving.

It is to be obſerved accordingly, that we are ſtill more anxious to communicate to our friends our diſagreeable than our agreeable paſſions, that we derive ſtill more ſatisfaction from their ſympathy

ſympathy with the former than from that with the latter, and that we are ſtill more ſhocked by the want of it. SECT. I.

How are the unfortunate relieved when they have found out a perſon to whom they can communicate the cauſe of their ſorrow? Upon his ſympathy they ſeem to diſburthen themſelves of a part of their diſtreſs: he is not improperly ſaid to ſhare it with them. He not only feels a ſorrow of the ſame kind with that which they feel, but, as if he had derived a part of it to himſelf, what he feels ſeems to alleviate the weight of what they feel. Yet by relating their misfortunes they in ſome meaſure renew their grief. They awaken in their memory the remembrance of thoſe circumſtances which occaſion their affliction. Their tears accordingly flow faſter than before, and they are apt to abandon themſelves to all the weakneſs of ſorrow. They take pleaſure, however, in all this, and, it is evident, are ſenſibly relieved by it; becauſe the ſweetneſs of his ſympathy more than compenſates the bitterneſs of that ſorrow, which, in order to excite this ſympathy, they had thus enlivened and renewed. The cruelleſt inſult, on the contrary, which can be offered to the unfortunate, is to appear to make light of their calamities. To ſeem not to be affected with the joy of our companions is but want of politeneſs; but not to wear a ſerious countenance when they tell us their afflictions, is real and groſs inhumanity.

Love is an agreeable; reſentment, a diſagreeable

PART I. able paſſion; and accordingly we are not half ſo anxious that our friends ſhould adopt our friendſhips, as that they ſhould enter into our reſentments. We can forgive them though they ſeem to be little affected with the favours which we may have received, but loſe all patience if they ſeem indifferent about the injuries which may have been done to us: nor are we half ſo angry with them for not entering into our gratitude, as for not ſympathizing with our reſentment. They can eaſily avoid being friends to our friends, but can hardly avoid being enemies to thoſe with whom we are at variance. We ſeldom reſent their being at enmity with the firſt, though upon that account we may ſometimes affect to make an awkward quarrel with them; but we quarrel with them in good earneſt if they live in friendſhip with the laſt. The agreeable paſſions of love and joy can ſatisfy and ſupport the heart without any auxiliary pleaſure. The bitter and painful emotions of grief and reſentment more ſtrongly require the healing conſolation of ſympathy.

As the perſon who is principally intereſted in any event is pleaſed with our ſympathy, and hurt by the want of it, ſo we, too, ſeem to be pleaſed when we are able to ſympathize with him, and to be hurt when we are unable to do ſo. We run not only to congratulate the ſucceſsful, but to condole with the afflicted; and the pleaſure which we find in the converſation of one whom in all the paſſions of his heart we can entirely ſympathize with, ſeems to do more

than compenſate the painfulneſs of that ſorrow with which the view of his ſituation affects us. On the contrary, it is always diſagreeable to feel that we cannot ſympathize with him, and inſtead of being pleaſed with this exemption from ſympathetic pain, it hurts us to find that we cannot ſhare his uneaſineſs. If we hear a perſon loudly lamenting his misfortunes, which however, upon bringing the caſe home to ourſelves, we feel, can produce no ſuch violent effect upon us, we are ſhocked at his grief; and, becauſe we cannot enter into it, call it puſillanimity and weakneſs. It gives us the ſpleen, on the other hand, to ſee another too happy or too much elevated, as we call it, with any little piece of good fortune. We are diſobliged even with his joy; and, becauſe we cannot go along with it, call it levity and folly. We are even put out of humour if our companion laughs louder or longer at a joke than we think it deſerves; that is, than we feel that we ourſelves could laugh at it.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

Of the manner in which we judge of the propriety or impropriety of the affections of other men, by their concord or dissonance with our own.

WHEN the original passions of the person principally concerned are in perfect concord with the sympathetic emotions of the spectator, they necessarily appear to this last just and proper, and suitable to their objects; and, on the contrary, when, upon bringing the case home to himself, he finds that they do not coincide with what he feels, they necessarily appear to him unjust and improper, and unsuitable to the causes which excite them. To approve of the passions of another, therefore, as suitable to their objects, is the same thing as to observe that we entirely sympathize with them; and not to approve of them as such, is the same thing as to observe that we do not entirely sympathize with them. The man who resents the injuries that have been done to me, and observes that I resent them precisely as he does, necessarily approves of my resentment. The man whose sympathy keeps time to my grief, cannot but admit the reasonableness of my sorrow. He who admires the same poem, or the same picture, and admires them exactly as I do, must surely allow the justness of my admiration. He who laughs at the same joke, and laughs

laughs along with me, cannot well deny the propriety of my laughter. On the contrary, the perſon who, upon theſe different occaſions, either feels no ſuch emotion as that which I feel, or feels none that bears any proportion to mine, cannot avoid diſapproving my ſentiments on account of their diſſonance with his own. If my animoſity goes beyond what the indignation of my friend can correſpond to; if my grief exceeds what his moſt tender compaſſion can go along with; if my admiration is either too high or too low to tally with his own; if I laugh loud and heartily when he only ſmiles, or, on the contrary, only ſmile when he laughs loud and heartily; in all theſe caſes, as ſoon as he comes from conſidering the object, to obſerve how I am affected by it, according as there is more or leſs diſproportion between his ſentiments and mine, I muſt incur a greater or leſs degree of his diſapprobation: and upon all occaſions his own ſentiments are the ſtandards and meaſures by which he judges of mine.

To approve of another man's opinions is to adopt thoſe opinions, and to adopt them is to approve of them. If the ſame arguments which convince you convince me likewiſe, I neceſſarily approve of your conviction; and if they do not, I neceſſarily diſapprove of it: neither can I poſſibly conceive that I ſhould do the one without the other. To approve or diſapprove, therefore, of the opinions of others is acknowledged, by every body, to mean no more than to obſerve their agreement or diſagreement with our own.

 But

PART I. But this is equally the caſe with regard to our approbation or diſapprobation of the ſentiments or paſſions of others.

There are, indeed, ſome caſes in which we ſeem to approve without any ſympathy or correſpondence of ſentiments, and in which, conſequently, the ſentiment of approbation would ſeem to be different from the perception of this coincidence. A little attention, however, will convince us that even in theſe caſes our approbation is ultimately founded upon a ſympathy or correſpondence of this kind. I ſhall give an inſtance in things of a very frivolous nature, becauſe in them the judgments of mankind are leſs apt to be perverted by wrong ſyſtems. We may often approve of a jeſt, and think the laughter of the company quite juſt and proper, though we ourſelves do not laugh, becauſe, perhaps, we are in a grave humour, or happen to have our attention engaged with other objects. We have learned, however, from experience, what ſort of pleaſantry is upon moſt occaſions capable of making us laugh, and we obſerve that this is one of that kind. We approve, therefore, of the laughter of the company, and feel that it is natural and ſuitable to its object; becauſe, though in our preſent mood we cannot eaſily enter into it, we are ſenſible that upon moſt occaſions we ſhould very heartily join in it.

The ſame thing often happens with regard to all the other paſſions. A ſtranger paſſes by us in the ſtreet with all the marks of the deepeſt affliction; and we are immediately told that he

has juſt received the news of the death of his father. It is impoſſible that, in this caſe, we ſhould not approve of his grief. Yet it may often happen, without any defect of humanity on our part, that, ſo far from entering into the violence of his ſorrow, we ſhould ſcarce conceive the firſt movements of concern upon his account. Both he and his father, perhaps, are entirely unknown to us, or we happen to be employed about other things, and do not take time to picture out in our imagination the different circumſtances of diſtreſs which muſt occur to him. We have learned, however, from experience, that ſuch a misfortune naturally excites ſuch a degree of ſorrow, and we know that if we took time to conſider his ſituation, fully and in all its parts, we ſhould, without doubt, moſt ſincerely ſympathize with him. It is upon the conſciouſneſs of this conditional ſympathy, that our approbation of his ſorrow is founded, even in thoſe caſes in which that ſympathy does not actually take place; and the general rules derived from our preceding experience of what our ſentiments would commonly correſpond with, correct upon this, as upon many other occaſions, the impropriety of our preſent emotions.

The ſentiment or affection of the heart from which any action proceeds, and upon which its whole virtue or vice muſt ultimately depend, may be conſidered under two different aſpects, or in two different relations; firſt, in relation to the cauſe which excites it, or the motive which gives occaſion to it; and ſecondly, in relation to

PART I. the end which it propoſes, or the effect which it tends to produce.

In the ſuitableneſs or unſuitableneſs, in the proportion or diſproportion which the affection ſeems to bear to the cauſe or object which excites it, conſiſts the propriety or impropriety, the decency or ungracefulneſs of the conſequent action.

In the beneficial or hurtful nature of the effects which the affection aims at, or tends to produce, conſiſts the merit or demerit of the action, the qualities by which it is entitled to reward, or is deſerving of puniſhment.

Philoſophers have, of late years, conſidered chiefly the tendency of affections, and have given little attention to the relation which they ſtand in to the cauſe which excites them. In common life, however, when we judge of any perſon's conduct, and of the ſentiments which directed it, we conſtantly conſider them under both theſe aſpects. When we blame in another man the exceſſes of love, of grief, of reſentment, we not only conſider the ruinous effects which they tend to produce, but the little occaſion which was given for them. The merit of his favourite, we ſay, is not ſo great, his misfortune is not ſo dreadful, his provocation is not ſo extraordinary, as to juſtify ſo violent a paſſion. We ſhould have indulged, we ſay; perhaps, have approved of the violence of his emotion, had the cauſe been in any reſpect proportioned to it.

When we judge in this manner of any affection as proportioned or diſproportioned to the cauſe

cauſe which excites it, it is ſcarce poſſible we ſhould make uſe of any other rule or can but the correſpondent affection in ourſelves. If, upon bringing the caſe home to our own breaſt, we find that the ſentiments which it gives occaſion to, coincide and tally with our own, we neceſſarily approve of them as proportioned and ſuitable to their objects; if otherwiſe, we neceſſarily diſapprove of them, as extravagant and out of proportion.

Every faculty in one man is the meaſure by which he judges of the like faculty in another. I judge of your ſight by my ſight, of your ear by my ear, of your reaſon by my reaſon, of your reſentment by my reſentment, of your love by my love. I neither have, nor can have, any other way of judging about them.

CHAP. IV.

The ſame ſubject continued.

WE may judge of the propriety or impropriety of the ſentiments of another perſon by their correſpondence or diſagreement with our own, upon two different occaſions; either, firſt, when the objects which excite them are conſidered without any peculiar relation, either to ourſelves or to the perſon whoſe ſentiments we judge of; or, ſecondly, when they

PART I. are conſidered as peculiarly affecting one or other of us.

1. With regard to thoſe objects which are conſidered without any peculiar relation either to ourſelves or to the perſon whoſe ſentiments we judge of; wherever his ſentiments entirely correſpond with our own, we aſcribe to him the qualities of taſte and good judgment. The beauty of a plain, the greatneſs of a mountain, the ornaments of a building, the expreſſion of a picture, the compoſition of a diſcourſe, the conduct of a third perſon, the proportions of different quantities and numbers, the various appearances which the great machine of the univerſe is perpetually exhibiting, with the ſecret wheels and ſprings which produce them; all the general ſubjects of ſcience and taſte, are what we and our companions regard as having no peculiar relation to either of us. We both look at them from the ſame point of view, and we have no occaſion for ſympathy, or for that imaginary change of ſituations from which it ariſes, in order to produce, with regard to theſe, the moſt perfect harmony of ſentiments and affections. If, notwithſtanding, we are often differently affected, it ariſes either from the different degrees of attention, which our different habits of life allow us to give eaſily to the ſeveral parts of thoſe complex objects, or from the different degrees of natural acuteneſs in the faculty of the mind to which they are addreſſed.

When the ſentiments of our companion coincide with our own in things of this kind, which are

are obvious and easy, and in which, perhaps, we never found a single person who differed from us, though we, no doubt, must approve of them, yet he seems to deserve no praise or admiration on account of them. But when they not only coincide with our own, but lead and direct our own; when in forming them he appears to have attended to many things which we had overlooked, and to have adjusted them to all the various circumstances of their objects; we not only approve of them, but wonder and are surprised at their uncommon and unexpected acuteness and comprehensiveness, and he appears to deserve a very high degree of admiration and applause. For approbation heightened by wonder and surprise, constitutes the sentiment which is properly called admiration, and of which applause is the natural expression. The decision of the man who judges that exquisite beauty is preferable to the grossest deformity, or that twice two are equal to four, must certainly be approved of by all the world, but will not, surely, be much admired. It is the acute and delicate discernment of the man of taste, who distinguishes the minute, and scarce perceptible differences of beauty and deformity; it is the comprehensive accuracy of the experienced mathematician, who unravels, with ease, the most intricate and perplexed proportions; it is the great leader in science and taste, the man who directs and conducts our own sentiments, the extent and superior justness of whose talents astonish us with wonder and surprise, who

PART I. excites our admiration, and ſeems to deſerve our applauſe: and upon this foundation is grounded the greater part of the praiſe which is beſtowed upon what are called the intellectual virtues.

The utility of thoſe qualities, it may be thought, is what firſt recommends them to us; and, no doubt, the conſideration of this, when we come to attend to it, gives them a new value. Originally, however, we approve of another man's judgment, not as ſomething uſeful, but as right, as accurate, as agreeable to truth and reality: and it is evident we attribute thoſe qualities to it for no other reaſon but becauſe we find that it agrees with our own. Taſte, in the ſame manner, is originally approved of, not as uſeful, but as juſt, as delicate, and as preciſely ſuited to its object. The idea of the utility of all qualities of this kind, is plainly an afterthought, and not what firſt recommends them to our approbation.

2. With regard to thoſe objects, which affect in a particular manner either ourſelves or the perſon whoſe ſentiments we judge of, it is at once more difficult to preſerve this harmony and correſpondence, and at the ſame time, vaſtly more important. My companion does not naturally look upon the misfortune that has befallen me, or the injury that has been done me, from the ſame point of view in which I conſider them. They affect me much more nearly. We do not view them from the ſame ſtation, as we do a picture, or a poem, or a ſyſtem of philoſophy,

phy, and are, therefore, apt to be very differently affected by them. But I can much more easily overlook the want of this correspondence of sentiments with regard to such indifferent objects as concern neither me nor my companion, than with regard to what interests me so much as the misfortune that has befallen me, or the injury that has been done me. Though you despise that picture, or that poem, or even that system of philosophy, which I admire, there is little danger of our quarrelling upon that account. Neither of us can reasonably be much interested about them. They ought all of them to be matters of great indifference to us both; so that, though our opinions may be opposite, our affections may still be very nearly the same. But it is quite otherwise with regard to those objects by which either you or I are particularly affected. Though your judgments in matters of speculation, though your sentiments in matters of taste, are quite opposite to mine, I can easily overlook this opposition; and if I have any degree of temper, I may still find some entertainment in your conversation, even upon those very subjects. But if you have either no fellow-feeling for the misfortunes I have met with, or none that bears any proportion to the grief which distracts me; or if you have either no indignation at the injuries I have suffered, or none that bears any proportion to the resentment which transports me, we can no longer converse upon these subjects. We become intolerable to one another. I can neither support your company, nor you mine.

PART I. mine. You are confounded at my violence and paſſion, and I am enraged at your cold inſenſibility and want of feeling.

In all ſuch caſes, that there may be ſome correſpondence of ſentiments between the ſpectator and the perſon principally concerned, the ſpectator muſt, firſt of all, endeavour, as much as he can, to put himſelf in the ſituation of the other, and to bring home to himſelf every little circumſtance of diſtreſs which can poſſibly occur to the ſufferer. He muſt adopt the whole caſe of his companion with all its minuteſt incidents; and ſtrive to render as perfect as poſſible, that imaginary change of ſituation upon which his ſympathy is founded.

After all this, however, the emotions of the ſpectator will ſtill be very apt to fall ſhort of the violence of what is felt by the ſufferer. Mankind, though naturally ſympathetic, never conceive, for what has befallen another, that degree of paſſion which naturally animates the perſon principally concerned. That imaginary change of ſituation, upon which their ſympathy is founded, is but momentary. The thought of their own ſafety, the thought that they themſelves are not really the ſufferers, continually intrudes itſelf upon them; and though it does not hinder them from conceiving a paſſion ſomewhat analogous to what is felt by the ſufferer, hinders them from conceiving any thing that approaches to the ſame degree of violence. The perſon principally concerned is ſenſible of this, and at the ſame time paſſionately deſires a more com-

complete ſympathy. He longs for that relief which nothing can afford him but the entire concord of the affections of the ſpectators with his own. To ſee the emotions of their hearts, in every reſpect, beat time to his own, in the violent and diſagreeable paſſions, conſtitutes his ſole conſolation. But he can only hope to obtain this by lowering his paſſion to that pitch, in which the ſpectators are capable of going along with him. He muſt flatten, if I may be allowed to ſay ſo, the ſharpneſs of its natural tone, in order to reduce it to harmony and concord with the emotions of thoſe who are about him. What they feel, will, indeed, always be, in ſome reſpects, different from what he feels, and compaſſion can never be exactly the ſame with original ſorrow; becauſe the ſecret conſciouſneſs that the change of ſituations, from which the ſympathetic ſentiment ariſes, is but imaginary, not only lowers it in degree, but, in ſome meaſure, varies it in kind, and gives it a quite different modification. Theſe two ſentiments, however, may, it is evident, have ſuch a correſpondence with one another, as is ſufficient for the harmony of ſociety. Though they will never be uniſons, they may be concords, and this is all that is wanted or required.

In order to produce this concord, as nature teaches the ſpectators to aſſume the circumſtances of the perſon principally concerned, ſo ſhe teaches this laſt in ſome meaſure to aſſume thoſe of the ſpectators. As they are continually placing themſelves in his ſituation, and thence con-

PART I. conceiving emotions ſimilar to what he feels; ſo he is as conſtantly placing himſelf in theirs, and thence conceiving ſome degree of that coolneſs about his own fortune, with which he is ſenſible that they will view it. As they are conſtantly conſidering what they themſelves would feel, if they actually were the ſufferers, ſo he is as conſtantly led to imagine in what manner he would be affected if he was only one of the ſpectators of his own ſituation. As their ſympathy makes them look at it, in ſome meaſure, with his eyes, ſo his ſympathy makes him look at it, in ſome meaſure, with theirs, eſpecially when in their preſence and acting under their obſervation: and as the reflected paſſion, which he thus conceives, is much weaker than the original one, it neceſſarily abates the violence of what he felt before he came into their preſence, before he began to recollect in what manner they would be affected by it, and to view his ſituation in this candid and impartial light.

The mind, therefore, is rarely ſo diſturbed, but that the company of a friend will reſtore it to ſome degree of tranquillity and ſedateneſs. The breaſt is, in ſome meaſure, calmed and compoſed the moment we come into his preſence. We are immediately put in mind of the light in which he will view our ſituation, and we begin to view it ourſelves in the ſame light; for the effect of ſympathy is inſtantaneous. We expect leſs ſympathy from a common acquaintance than from a friend: we cannot open to the former all thoſe little circumſtances which we can unfold

to

to the latter: we aſſume, therefore, more tranquillity before him, and endeavour to fix our thoughts upon thoſe general outlines of our ſituation which he is willing to conſider. We expect ſtill leſs ſympathy from an aſſembly of ſtrangers, and we aſſume, therefore, ſtill more tranquillity before them, and always endeavour to bring down our paſſion to that pitch, which the particular company we are in may be expected to go along with. Nor is this only an aſſumed appearance: for if we are at all maſters of ourſelves, the preſence of a mere acquaintance will really compoſe us, ſtill more than that of a friend; and that of an aſſembly of ſtrangers ſtill more than that of an acquaintance.

Society and converſation, therefore, are the moſt powerful remedies for reſtoring the mind to its tranquillity, if, at any time, it has unfortunately loſt it; as well as the beſt preſervatives of that equal and happy temper, which is ſo neceſſary to ſelf-ſatisfaction and enjoyment. Men of retirement and ſpeculation, who are apt to ſit brooding at home over either grief or reſentment, though they may often have more humanity, more generoſity, and a nicer ſenſe of honour, yet ſeldom poſſeſs that equality of temper which is ſo common among men of the world.

CHAP.

PART I.

CHAP. V.

Of the amiable and respectable virtues.

UPON these two different efforts, upon that of the spectator to enter into the sentiments of the person principally concerned, and upon that of the person principally concerned, to bring down his emotions to what the spectator can go along with, are founded two different sets of virtues. The soft, the gentle, the amiable virtues, the virtues of candid condescension and indulgent humanity, are founded upon the one: the great, the awful and respectable, the virtues of self-denial, of self-government, of that command of the passions which subjects all the movements of our nature to what our own dignity and honour, and the propriety of our own conduct require, take their origin from the other.

How amiable does he appear to be, whose sympathetic heart seems to re-echo all the sentiments of those with whom he converses, who grieves for their calamities, who resents their injuries, and who rejoices at their good fortune! When we bring home to ourselves the situation of his companions, we enter into their gratitude, and feel what consolation they must derive from the tender sympathy of so affectionate a friend. And for a contrary reason, how disagreeable does he appear to be, whose hard and obdurate heart feels for himself only, but is altogether in-

ſenſible to the happineſs or miſery of others! We enter, in this caſe too, into the pain which his preſence muſt give to every mortal with whom he converſes, to thoſe eſpecially with whom we are moſt apt to ſympathize, the unfortunate and the injured. SECT. I.

On the other hand, what noble propriety and grace do we feel in the conduct of thoſe who, in their own caſe, exert that recollection and ſelf-command which conſtitute the dignity of every paſſion, and which bring it down to what others can enter into? We are diſguſted with that clamorous grief, which, without any delicacy, calls upon our compaſſion with ſighs and tears and importunate lamentations. But we reverence that reſerved, that ſilent and majeſtic ſorrow, which diſcovers itſelf only in the ſwelling of the eyes, in the quivering of the lips and cheeks, and in the diſtant, but affecting, coldneſs of the whole behaviour. It impoſes the like ſilence upon us. We regard it with reſpectful attention, and watch with anxious concern over our whole behaviour, left by any impropriety we ſhould diſturb that concerted tranquillity, which it requires ſo great an effort to ſupport.

The inſolence and brutality of anger, in the ſame manner, when we indulge its fury without check or reſtraint, is of all objects the moſt deteſtable. But we admire that noble and generous reſentment which governs its purſuit of the greateſt injuries, not by the rage which they are apt to excite in the breaſt of the ſufferer, but by the indignation which they naturally call forth

in

PART I.

in that of the impartial ſpectator; which allows no word, no geſture, to eſcape it beyond what this more equitable ſentiment would dictate; which never, even in thought, attempts any greater vengeance, nor deſires to inflict any greater puniſhment, than what every indifferent perſon would rejoice to ſee executed.

And hence it is, that to feel much for others and little for ourſelves, that to reſtrain our ſelfiſh, and to indulge our benevolent affections, conſtitutes the perfection of human nature; and can alone produce among mankind that harmony of ſentiments and paſſions in which conſiſts their whole grace and propriety. As to love our neighbour as we love ourſelves is the great law of Chriſtianity, ſo it is the great precept of nature to love ourſelves only as we love our neighbour, or what comes to the ſame thing, as our neighbour is capable of loving us.

As taſte and good judgment, when they are conſidered as qualities which deſerve praiſe and admiration, are ſuppoſed to imply a delicacy of ſentiment and an acuteneſs of underſtanding not commonly to be met with; ſo the virtues of ſenſibility and ſelf-command are not apprehended to conſiſt in the ordinary, but in the uncommon degrees of thoſe qualities. The amiable virtue of humanity requires, ſurely, a ſenſibility, much beyond what is poſſeſſed by the rude vulgar of mankind. The great and exalted virtue of magnanimity undoubtedly demands much more than that degree of ſelf-command, which the weakeſt of mortals is capable

pable of exerting. As in the common degree of the intellectual qualities, there is no abilities; so in the common degree of the moral, there is no virtue. Virtue is excellence, something uncommonly great and beautiful, which rises far above what is vulgar and ordinary. The amiable virtues consist in that degree of sensibility which surprises by its exquisite and unexpected delicacy and tenderness. The awful and respectable, in that degree of self-command which astonishes by its amazing superiority over the most ungovernable passions of human nature.

There is, in this respect, a considerable difference between virtue and mere propriety; between those qualities and actions which deserve to be admired and celebrated, and those which simply deserve to be approved of. Upon many occasions, to act with the most perfect propriety, requires no more than that common and ordinary degree of sensibility or self-command which the most worthless of mankind are possest of, and sometimes even that degree is not necessary. Thus, to give a very low instance, to eat when we are hungry, is certainly, upon ordinary occasions, perfectly right and proper, and cannot miss being approved of as such by every body. Nothing, however, could be more absurd than to say it was virtuous.

On the contrary, there may frequently be a considerable degree of virtue in those actions which fall short of the most perfect propriety; because they may still approach nearer to perfection than could well be expected upon occa-

PART I. ſions in which it was ſo extremely difficult to attain it: and this is very often the caſe upon thoſe occaſions which require the greateſt exertions of ſelf-command. There are ſome ſituations which bear ſo hard upon human nature, that the greateſt degree of ſelf-government, which can belong to ſo imperfect a creature as man, is not able to ſtifle, altogether, the voice of human weakneſs, or reduce the violence of the paſſions to that pitch of moderation, in which the impartial ſpectator can entirely enter into them. Though in thoſe caſes, therefore, the behaviour of the ſufferer fall ſhort of the moſt perfect propriety, it may ſtill deſerve ſome applauſe, and even in a certain ſenſe, may be denominated virtuous. It may ſtill manifeſt an effort of generoſity and magnanimity of which the greater part of men are incapable; and though it fails of abſolute perfection, it may be a much nearer approximation towards perfection, than what, upon ſuch trying occaſions, is commonly either to be found or to be expected.

In caſes of this kind, when we are determining the degree of blame or applauſe which ſeems due to any action, we very frequently make uſe of two different ſtandards. The firſt is the idea of complete propriety and perfection, which, in thoſe difficult ſituations, no human conduct ever did, or ever can come up to; and in compariſon with which the actions of all men muſt for ever appear blameable and imperfect. The ſecond is the idea of that degree of proximity or diſtance from this complete perfection, which the actions

of

of the greater part of men commonly arrive at. Whatever goes beyond this degree, how far ſoever it may be removed from abſolute perfection, ſeems to deſerve applauſe; and whatever falls ſhort of it, to deſerve blame. SECT. L.

It is in the ſame manner that we judge of the productions of all the arts which addreſs themſelves to the imagination. When a critic examines the work of any of the great maſters in poetry or painting, he may ſometimes examine it by an idea of perfection, in his own mind, which neither that nor any other human work will ever come up to; and as long as he compares it with this ſtandard, he can ſee nothing in it but faults and imperfections. But when he comes to conſider the rank which it ought to hold among other works of the ſame kind, he neceſſarily compares it with a very different ſtandard, the common degree of excellence which is uſually attained in this particular art; and when he judges of it by this new meaſure, it may often appear to deſerve the higheſt applauſe, upon account of its approaching much nearer to perfection than the greater part of thoſe works which can be brought into competition with it.

SECTION II.

OF THE DEGREES OF THE DIFFERENT PASSIONS WHICH ARE CONSISTENT WITH PROPRIETY.

INTRODUCTION.

THE propriety of every paſſion excited by objects peculiarly related to ourſelves, the pitch which the ſpectator can go along with, muſt lie, it is evident, in a certain mediocrity. If the paſſion is too high, or if it is too low, he cannot enter into it. Grief and reſentment for private misfortunes and injuries may eaſily, for example, be too high, and in the greater part of mankind they are ſo. They may likewiſe, though this more rarely happens, be too low. We denominate the exceſs, weakneſs and fury: and we call the defect ſtupidity, inſenſibility, and want of ſpirit. We can enter into neither of them, but are aſtoniſhed and confounded to ſee them.

This mediocrity, however, in which the point of propriety conſiſts, is different in different paſſions. It is high in ſome, and low in others. There are ſome paſſions which it is indecent to expreſs very ſtrongly, even upon thoſe occaſions, in which it is acknowledged that we cannot avoid feeling them in the higheſt degree. And there are others of which the ſtrongeſt expreſſions are upon many occaſions extremely graceful, even though the paſſions themſelves do not, perhaps, ariſe

arise so necessarily. The first are those passions with which, for certain reasons, there is little or no sympathy: the second are those with which, for other reasons, there is the greatest. And if we consider all the different passions of human nature, we shall find that they are regarded as decent, or indecent, just in proportion as mankind are more or less disposed to sympathize with them.

CHAP. I.

Of the Passions which take their origin from the body.

1. IT is indecent to express any strong degree of those passions which arise from a certain situation or disposition of the body; because the company, not being in the same disposition, cannot be expected to sympathize with them. Violent hunger, for example, though upon many occasions not only natural, but unavoidable, is always indecent, and to eat voraciously is universally regarded as a piece of ill manners. There is, however, some degree of sympathy, even with hunger. It is agreeable to see our companions eat with a good appetite, and all expressions of loathing are offensive. The disposition of body which is habitual to a man in health, makes his stomach easily keep time, if I

PART I. may be allowed ſo coarſe an expreſſion, with the one, and not with the other. We can ſympathize with the diſtreſs which exceſſive hunger occaſions when we read the deſcription of it in the journal of a ſiege, or of a ſea voyage. We imagine ourſelves in the ſituation of the ſufferers, and thence readily conceive the grief, the fear, and conſternation, which muſt neceſſarily diſtract them. We feel, ourſelves, ſome degree of thoſe paſſions, and therefore ſympathize with them: but as we do not grow hungry by reading the deſcription, we cannot properly, even in this caſe, be ſaid to ſympathize with their hunger.

It is the ſame caſe with the paſſion by which Nature unites the two ſexes. Though naturally the moſt furious of all the paſſions, all ſtrong expreſſions of it are upon every occaſion indecent, even between perſons in whom its moſt complete indulgence is acknowledged by all laws, both human and divine, to be perfectly innocent. There ſeems, however, to be ſome degree of ſympathy even with this paſſion. To talk to a woman as we ſhould to a man is improper: it is expected that their company ſhould inſpire us with more gaiety, more pleaſantry, and more attention; and an intire inſenſibility to the fair ſex, renders a man contemptible in ſome meaſure even to the men.

Such is our averſion for all the appetites which take their origin from the body; all ſtrong expreſſions of them are loathſome and diſagreeable. According to ſome ancient philo-

ſophers,

ſophers, theſe are the paſſions which we ſhare in common with the brutes, and which, having no connexion with the characteriſtical qualities of human nature, are upon that account beneath its dignity. But there are many other paſſions which we ſhare in common with the brutes, ſuch as reſentment, natural affection, even gratitude, which do not, upon that account, appear to be ſo brutal. The true cauſe of the peculiar diſguſt which we conceive for the appetites of the body when we ſee them in other men, is that we cannot enter into them. To the perſon himſelf who feels them, as ſoon as they are gratified, the object that excited them ceaſes to be agreeable: even its preſence often becomes offenſive to him; he looks round to no purpoſe for the charm which tranſported him the moment before, and he can now as little enter into his own paſſion as another perſon. When we have dined, we order the covers to be removed; and we ſhould treat in the ſame manner the objects of the moſt ardent and paſſionate deſires, if they were the objects of no other paſſions but thoſe which take their origin from the body.

In the command of thoſe appetites of the body conſiſts that virtue which is properly called temperance. To reſtrain them within thoſe bounds, which regard to health and fortune preſcribes, is the part of prudence. But to confine them within thoſe limits, which grace, which propriety, which delicacy, and modeſty, require, is the office of temperance.

PART I.

2. It is for the ſame reaſon that to cry out with bodily pain, how intolerable ſoever, appears always unmanly and unbecoming. There is, however, a good deal of ſympathy even with bodily pain. If, as has already been obſerved, I ſee a ſtroke aimed, and juſt ready to fall upon the leg, or arm, of another perſon, I naturally ſhrink and draw back my own leg, or my own arm: and when it does fall, I feel it in ſome meaſure, and am hurt by it as well as the ſufferer. My hurt, however, is, no doubt, exceſſively ſlight, and, upon that account, if he makes any violent out-cry, as I cannot go along with him, I never fail to deſpiſe him. And this is the caſe of all the paſſions which take their origin from the body: they excite either no ſympathy at all, or ſuch a degree of it, as is altogether diſproportioned to the violence of what is felt by the ſufferer.

It is quite otherwiſe with thoſe paſſions which take their origin from the imagination. The frame of my body can be but little affected by the alterations which are brought about upon that of my companion: but my imagination is more ductile, and more readily aſſumes, if I may ſay ſo, the ſhape and configuration of the imaginations of thoſe with whom I am familiar. A diſappointment in love, or ambition, will, upon this account, call forth more ſympathy than the greateſt bodily evil. Thoſe paſſions ariſe altogether from the imagination. The perſon who has loſt his whole fortune, if he is in health, feels nothing

thing in his body. What he ſuffers is from the imagination only, which repreſents to him the loſs of his dignity, neglect from his friends, contempt from his enemies, dependance, want, and miſery, coming faſt upon him; and we ſympathize with him more ſtrongly upon this account, becauſe our imaginations can more readily mould themſelves upon his imagination, than our bodies can mould themſelves upon his body.

The loſs of a leg may generally be regarded as a more real calamity than the loſs of a miſtreſs. It would be a ridiculous tragedy, however, of which the cataſtrophe was to turn upon a loſs of that kind. A misfortune of the other kind, how frivolous ſoever it may appear to be, has given occaſion to many a fine one.

Nothing is ſo ſoon forgot as pain. The moment it is gone the whole agony of it is over, and the thought of it can no longer give us any ſort of diſturbance. We ourſelves cannot then enter into the anxiety and anguiſh which we had before conceived. An unguarded word from a friend will occaſion a more durable uneaſineſs. The agony which this creates is by no means over with the word. What at firſt diſturbs us is not the object of the ſenſes, but the idea of the imagination. As it is an idea, therefore, which occaſions our uneaſineſs, till time and other accidents have in ſome meaſure effaced it from our memory, the imagination continues to fret and rankle within, from the thought of it.

Pain

PART I. Pain never calls forth any very lively ſympathy unleſs it is accompanied with danger. We ſympathize with the fear, though not with the agony of the ſufferer. Fear, however, is a paſſion derived altogether from the imagination, which repreſents, with an uncertainty and fluctuation that increaſes our anxiety, not what we really feel, but what we may hereafter poſſibly ſuffer. The gout or the tooth-ach, though exquiſitely painful, excite very little ſympathy; more dangerous diſeaſes, though accompanied with very little pain, excite the higheſt.

Some people faint and grow ſick at the ſight of a chirurgical operation, and that bodily pain which is occaſioned by tearing the fleſh, ſeems, in them, to excite the moſt exceſſive ſympathy. We conceive in a much more lively and diſtinct manner the pain which proceeds from an external cauſe, than we do that which ariſes from an internal diſorder. I can ſcarce form an idea of the agonies of my neighbour when he is tortured with the gout, or the ſtone; but I have the cleareſt conception of what he muſt ſuffer from an inciſion, a wound, or a fracture. The chief cauſe, however, why ſuch objects produce ſuch violent effects upon us, is their novelty. One who has been witneſs to a dozen diſſections, and as many amputations, ſees, ever after, all operations of this kind with great indifference, and often with perfect inſenſibility. Though we have read or ſeen repreſented more than five hundred tragedies, we ſhall ſeldom feel ſo entire an

an abatement of our ſenſibility to the objects which they repreſent to us. SECT. II.

In ſome of the Greek tragedies there is an attempt to excite compaſſion, by the repreſentation of the agonies of bodily pain. Philoctetes cries out and faints from the extremity of his ſufferings. Hippolytus and Hercules are both introduced as expiring under the ſevereſt tortures, which, it ſeems, even the fortitude of Hercules was incapable of ſupporting. In all theſe caſes, however, it is not the pain which intereſts us, but ſome other circumſtance. It is not the ſore foot, but the ſolitude, of Philoctetes which affects us, and diffuſes over that charming tragedy, that romantic wildneſs, which is ſo agreeable to the imagination. The agonies of Hercules and Hippolytus are intereſting only becauſe we foreſee that death is to be the conſequence. If thoſe heroes were to recover, we ſhould think the repreſentation of their ſufferings perfectly ridiculous. What a tragedy would that be of which the diſtreſs conſiſted in a colic! Yet no pain is more exquiſite. Theſe attempts to excite compaſſion by the repreſentation of bodily pain, may be regarded as among the greateſt breaches of decorum of which the Greek theatre has ſet the example.

The little ſympathy which we feel with bodily pain, is the foundation of the propriety of conſtancy and patience in enduring it. The man, who under the ſevereſt tortures allows no weakneſs to eſcape him, vents no groan, gives way to no paſſion which we do not entirely

enter

PART I. enter into, commands our highest admiration. His firmness enables him to keep time with our indifference and insensibility. We admire and entirely go along with the magnanimous effort which he makes for this purpose. We approve of his behaviour, and from our experience of the common weakness of human nature, we are surprised, and wonder how he should be able to act so as to deserve approbation. Approbation, mixed and animated by wonder and surprise, constitutes the sentiment which is properly called admiration, of which, applause is the natural expression, as has already been observed.

CHAP. II.

Of those Passions which take their origin from a particular turn or habit of the Imagination.

EVEN of the passions derived from the imagination, those which take their origin from a peculiar turn or habit it has acquired, though they may be acknowledged to be perfectly natural, are, however, but little sympathized with. The imaginations of mankind, not having acquired that particular turn, cannot enter into them; and such passions, though they may be allowed to be almost unavoidable in some part of life, are always, in some measure, ridiculous. This is the case with that strong at-

achment wl h illy grows up between two persons of different sexes, who have long fixed heir thoughts upon one another. Our imagination not having run in the same channel with hat of the lover, we can t enter into the eagerness of his emotions. If our friend has been injured, we readily sympathize with his resentment, and grow angry with the very person with whom he is angry. If he has received a benefit, we readily enter into his gratitude, and have a very high sense of the merit of his benefactor. But if he is in love, though we may think his passion just as reasonable as any of the kind, yet we never think ourselves bound to conceive a passion of the same kind, and for the same person for whom he has conceived it. The passion appears to every body, but the man who feels it, entirely disproportioned to the value of the object; and love, though it is pardoned in a certain age because we know it is natural, is always laughed at, because we cannot enter into it. All serious and strong expressions of it appear ridiculous to a third person; and though a lover may be good company to his mistress, he is so to nobody else. He himself is sensible of this; and as long as he continues in his sober senses, endeavours to treat his own passion with raillery and ridicule. It is the only style in which we care to hear of it; because it is the only style in which we ourselves are disposed to talk of it. We grow weary of the grave, pedantic, and long-sentenced love of Cowley and Petrarca, who never have done with exaggerating the violence

SECT. II.

of

PART I. of their attachments; but the gaiety of Ovid, and the gallantry of Horace, are always agreeable.

But though we feel no proper ſympathy with an attachment of this kind, though we never approach even in imagination towards conceiving a paſſion for that particular perſon, yet as we either have conceived, or may be diſpoſed to conceive, paſſions of the ſame kind, we readily enter into thoſe high hopes of happineſs which are propoſed from its gratification, as well as into that exquiſite diſtreſs which is feared from its diſappointment. It intereſts us not as a paſſion, but as a ſituation that gives occaſion to other paſſions which intereſt us; to hope, to fear, and to diſtreſs of every kind: in the ſame manner as in a deſcription of a ſea voyage, it is not the hunger which intereſts us, but the diſtreſs which that hunger occaſions. Though we do not properly enter into the attachment of the lover, we readily go along with thoſe expectations of romantic happineſs which he derives from it. We feel how natural it is for the mind, in a certain ſituation, relaxed with indolence, and fatigued with the violence of deſire, to long for ſerenity and quiet, to hope to find them in the gratification of that paſſion which diſtracts it, and to frame to itſelf the idea of that life of paſtoral tranquillity and retirement which the elegant, the tender, and the paſſionate Tibullus takes ſo much pleaſure in deſcribing; a life like what the poets deſcribe in the Fortunate Iſlands, a life of friendſhip, liberty, and repoſe;

repoſe; free from labour, and from all the turbulent paſſions which attend them. Even ſcenes of this kind intereſt us moſt, when they are painted rather as what is hoped, than as what is enjoyed. The groſſneſs of that paſſion, which mixes with, and is, perhaps, the foundation of love, diſappears when its gratification is far off and at a diſtance; but renders the whole offenſive, when deſcribed as what is immediately poſſeſſed. The happy paſſion, upon this account, intereſts us much leſs than the fearful and the melancholy. We tremble for whatever can diſappoint ſuch natural and agreeable hopes: and thus enter into all the anxiety, and concern, and diſtreſs of the lover.

SECT. II.

Hence it is, that, in ſome modern tragedies and romances, this paſſion appears ſo wonderfully intereſting. It is not ſo much the love of Caſtalio and Monimia which attaches us in the Orphan, as the diſtreſs which that love occaſions. The author who ſhould introduce two lovers, in a ſcene of perfect ſecurity, expreſſing their mutual foodneſs for one another, would excite laughter, and not ſympathy. If a ſcene of this kind is ever admitted into a tragedy, it is always, in ſome meaſure, improper, and is endured, not from any ſympathy with the paſſion that is expreſſed in it, but from concern for the dangers and difficulties with which the audience foreſee that its gratification is likely to be attended.

The reſerve which the laws of ſociety impoſe upon the fair ſex, with regard to this weakneſs, renders it more peculiarly diſtreſsful in them,

PART I. and, upon that very account, more deeply interesting. We are charmed with the love of Phædra, as it is expressed in the French tragedy of that name, notwithstanding all the extravagance and guilt which attend it. That very extravagance and guilt may be said, in some measure, to recommend it to us. Her fear, her shame, her remorse, her horror, her despair, become thereby more natural and interesting. All the secondary passions, if I may be allowed to call them so, which arise from the situation of love, become necessarily more furious and violent; and it is with these secondary passions only that we can properly be said to sympathize.

Of all the passions, however, which are so extravagantly disproportioned to the value of their objects, love is the only one that appears, even to the weakest minds, to have any thing in it that is either graceful or agreeable. In itself, first of all, though it may be ridiculous, it is not naturally odious; and though its consequences are often fatal and dreadful, its intentions are seldom mischievous. And then, though there is little propriety in the passion itself, there is a good deal in some of those which always accompany it. There is in love a strong mixture of humanity, generosity, kindness, friendship, esteem; passions with which, of all others, for reasons which shall be explained immediately, we have the greatest propensity to sympathize, even notwithstanding we are sensible that they are, in some measure, excessive. The sympathy which we feel with them, renders the passion

which they accompany leſs diſagreeable, and ſupports it in our imagination, notwithſtanding all the vices which commonly go along with it; though in the one ſex it neceſſarily leads to the laſt ruin and infamy; and though in the other, where it is apprehended to be leaſt fatal, it is almoſt always attended with an incapacity for labour, a neglect of duty, a contempt of fame, and even of common reputation. Notwithſtanding all this, the degree of ſenſibility and generoſity with which it is ſuppoſed to be accompanied, renders it to many the object of vanity; and they are fond of appearing capable of feeling what would do them no honour if they had really felt it.

SECT. II.

It is for a reaſon of the ſame kind, that a certain reſerve is neceſſary when we talk of our own friends, our own ſtudies, our own profeſſions. All theſe are objects which we cannot expect ſhould intereſt our companions in the ſame degree in which they intereſt us. And it is for want of this reſerve, that the one half of mankind make bad company to the other. A philoſopher is company to a philoſopher only; the member of a club, to his own little knot of companions.

PART I.

CHAP. III.

Of the unſocial Paſſions.

THERE is another ſet of paſſions, which, though derived from the imagination, yet before we can enter into them, or regard them as graceful or becoming, muſt always be brought down to a pitch much lower than that to which undiſciplined nature would raiſe them. Theſe are, hatred and reſentment, with all their different modifications. With regard to all ſuch paſſions, our ſympathy is divided between the perſon who feels them, and the perſon who is the object of them. The intereſts of theſe two are directly oppoſite. What our ſympathy with the perſon who feels them would prompt us to wiſh for, our fellow-feeling with the other would lead us to fear. As they are both men, we are concerned for both, and our fear for what the one may ſuffer, damps our reſentment for what the other has ſuffered. Our ſympathy, therefore, with the man who has received the provocation, neceſſarily falls ſhort of the paſſion which naturally animates him, not only upon account of thoſe general cauſes which render all ſympathetic paſſions inferior to the original ones, but upon account of that particular cauſe which is peculiar to itſelf, our oppoſite ſympathy with another perſon. Before reſentment, therefore, can become graceful and agreeable, it muſt be more

more humbled and brought down below that pitch to which it would naturally rife, than almoft any other paffion. SECT. II.

Mankind, at the fame time, have a very ftrong fenfe of the injuries that are done to another. The villain, in a tragedy or romance, is as much the object of our indignation, as the hero is that of our fympathy and affection. We deteft Iago as much as we efteem Othello; and delight as much in the punifhment of the one, as we are grieved at the diftrefs of the other. But though mankind have fo ftrong a fellow-feeling with the injuries that are done to their brethren, they do not always refent them the more that the fufferer appears to refent them. Upon moft occafions, the greater his patience, his mildnefs, his humanity, provided it does not appear that he wants fpirit, or that fear was the motive of his forbearance, the higher the refentment againft the perfon who injured him. The amiablenefs of the character exafperates their fenfe of the atrocity of the injury.

Thefe paffions, however, are regarded as neceffary parts of the character of human nature. A perfon becomes contemptible who tamely fits ftill, and fubmits to infults, without attempting either to repel or to revenge them. We cannot enter into his indifference and infenfibility: we call his behaviour mean-fpiritednefs, and are as really provoked by it as by the infolence of his adverfary. Even the mob are enraged to fee any man fubmit patiently to affronts and ill ufage. They defire to fee this infolence refented, and

PART I. resented by the person who suffers from it. They cry to him with fury, to defend, or to revenge himself. If his indignation rouses at last, they heartily applaud, and sympathize with it. It enlivens their own indignation against his enemy, whom they rejoice to see him attack in turn, and are as really gratified by his revenge, provided it is not immoderate, as if the injury had been done to themselves.

But though the utility of those passions to the individual, by rendering it dangerous to insult or injure him, be acknowledged; and though their utility to the public, as the guardians of justice, and of the equality of its administration, be not less considerable, as shall be shewn hereafter; yet there is still something disagreeable in the passions themselves, which makes the appearance of them in other men the natural object of our aversion. The expression of anger towards any body present, if it exceeds a bare intimation that we are sensible of his ill usage, is regarded not only as an insult to that particular person, but as a rudeness to the whole company. Respect for them ought to have restrained us from giving way to so boisterous and offensive an emotion. It is the remote effects of these passions which are agreeable; the immediate effects are mischief to the person against whom they are directed. But it is the immediate, and not the remote effects of objects which render them agreeable or disagreeable to the imagination. A prison is certainly more useful to the public than a palace; and the person who founds the one is generally

generally directed by a much juſter ſpirit of patriotiſm, than he who builds the other. But the immediate effects of a priſon, the confinement of the wretches ſhut up in it, are diſagreeable; and the imagination either does not take time to trace out the remote ones, or ſees them at too great a diſtance to be much affected by them. A priſon, therefore, will always be a diſagreeable object; and the fitter it is for the purpoſe for which it was intended, it will be the more ſo. A palace, on the contrary, will always be agreeable; yet its remote effects may often be inconvenient to the public. It may ſerve to promote luxury, and ſet the example of the diſſolution of manners. Its immediate effects, however, the conveniency, the pleaſure, and the gaiety of the people who live in it, being all agreeable, and ſuggeſting to the imagination a thouſand agreeable ideas, that faculty generally reſts upon them, and ſeldom goes further in tracing its more diſtant conſequences. Trophies of the inſtruments of muſic or of agriculture, imitated in painting or in ſtucco, make a common and an agreeable ornament of our halls and dining rooms. A trophy of the ſame kind, compoſed of the inſtruments of ſurgery, of diſſecting and amputation-knives, of ſaws for cutting the bones, of trepanning inſtruments, &c. would be abſurd and ſhocking. Inſtruments of ſurgery, however, are always more finely poliſhed, and generally more nicely adapted to the purpoſes for which they are intended, than inſtruments of agriculture. The remote effects of them too,

SECT. II.

PART I. the health of the patient, is agreeable; yet as the immediate effect of them is pain and ſuffering, the ſight of them always diſpleaſes us. Inſtruments of war are agreeable, though their immediate effect may ſeem to be in the ſame manner pain and ſuffering. But then it is the pain and ſuffering of our enemies, with whom we have no ſympathy. With regard to us, they are immediately connected with the agreeable ideas of courage, victory, and honour. They are themſelves, therefore, ſuppoſed to make one of the nobleſt parts of dreſs, and the imitation of them one of the fineſt ornaments of architecture. It is the ſame caſe with the qualities of the mind. The ancient ſtoics were of opinion, that as the world was governed by the all-ruling providence of a wiſe, powerful, and good God, every ſingle event ought to be regarded, as making a neceſſary part of the plan of the univerſe, and as tending to promote the general order and happineſs of the whole: that the vices and follies of mankind, therefore, made as neceſſary a part of this plan as their wiſdom or their virtue; and by that eternal art which educes good from ill, were made to tend equally to the proſperity and perfection of the great ſyſtem of nature. No ſpeculation of this kind, however, how deeply ſoever it might be rooted in the mind, could diminiſh our natural abhorrence for vice, whoſe immediate effects are ſo deſtructive, and whoſe remote ones are too diſtant to be traced by the imagination.

It

It is the ſame caſe with thoſe paſſions we have been juſt now conſidering. Their immediate effects are ſo diſagreeable, that even when they are moſt juſtly provoked, there is ſtill ſomething about them which diſguſts us. Theſe, therefore, are the only paſſions of which the expreſſions, as I formerly obſerved, do not diſpoſe and prepare us to ſympathize with them, before we are informed of the cauſe which excites them. The plaintive voice of miſery, when heard at a diſtance, will not allow us to be indifferent about the perſon from whom it comes. As ſoon as it ſtrikes our ear, it intereſts us in his fortune, and, if continued, forces us almoſt involuntarily to fly to his aſſiſtance. The ſight of a ſmiling countenance, in the ſame manner, elevates even the penſive into that gay and airy mood, which diſpoſes him to ſympathize with, and ſhare the joy which it expreſſes; and he feels his heart, which with thought and care was before that ſhrunk and depreſſed, inſtantly expanded and elated. But it is quite otherwiſe with the expreſſions of hatred and reſentment. The hoarſe, boiſterous, and diſcordant voice of anger, when heard at a diſtance, inſpires us either with fear or averſion. We do not fly towards it, as to one who cries out with pain and agony. Women, and men of weak nerves, tremble and are overcome with fear, though ſenſible that themſelves are not the objects of the anger. They conceive fear, however, by putting themſelves in the ſituation of the perſon who is ſo. Even thoſe of ſtouter hearts are diſturbed; not indeed enough to make them afraid, but enough to make them

PART I. angry; for anger is the paſſion which they would feel in the ſituation of the other perſon. It is the ſame caſe with hatred. Mere expreſſions of ſpite inſpire it againſt nobody, but the man who uſes them. Both theſe paſſions are by nature the objects of our averſion. Their diſagreeable and boiſterous appearance never excites, never prepares, and often diſturbs our ſympathy. Grief does not more powerfully engage and attract us to the perſon in whom we obſerve it, than theſe, while we are ignorant of their cauſe, diſguſt and detach us from him. It was, it ſeems, the intention of Nature, that thoſe rougher and more unamiable emotions, which drive men from one another, ſhould be leſs eaſily and more rarely communicated.

When muſic imitates the modulations of grief or joy, it either actually inſpires us with thoſe paſſions, or at leaſt puts us in the mood which diſpoſes us to conceive them. But when it imitates the notes of anger, it inſpires us with fear. Joy, grief, love, admiration, devotion, are all of them paſſions which are naturally muſical. Their natural tones are all ſoft, clear, and melodious; and they naturally expreſs themſelves in periods which are diſtinguiſhed by regular pauſes, and which upon that account are eaſily adapted to the regular returns of the correſpondent airs of a tune. The voice of anger, on the contrary, and of all the paſſions which are akin to it, is harſh and diſcordant. Its periods too are all irregular, ſometimes very long, and ſometimes very ſhort, and diſtinguiſhed by no regular pauſes. It is with difficulty, therefore, that muſic

can

mitate any of thoſe paſſions; and the muſic h does imitate them is not the moſt agree-

A whole entertainment may conſiſt, with- any impropriety, of the imitation of the l and agreeable paſſions. It would be a ge entertainment which conſiſted altogether e imitations of hatred and reſentment.

thoſe paſſions are diſagreeable to the ſpec-, they are not leſs ſo to the perſon who them. Hatred and anger are the greateſt n to the happineſs of a good mind. There 1 the very feeling of thoſe paſſions, ſome- harſh, jarring, and convulſive, ſomething tears and diſtracts the breaſt, and is alto- er deſtructive of that compoſure and tran- ity of mind which is ſo neceſſary to hap- ſs, and which is beſt promoted by the con- paſſions of gratitude and love. It is not value of what they loſe by the perfidy and titude of thoſe they live with, which the rous and humane are moſt apt to regret. tever they may have loſt, they can generally ery happy without it. What moſt diſturbs 1 is the idea of perfidy and ingratitude ciſed towards themſelves; and the diſcord- and diſagreeable paſſions which this excites, titute, in their own opinion, the chief part e injury which they ſuffer.

ow many things are requiſite to render the ification of reſentment completely agree-, and to make the ſpectator thoroughly ſym- ize with our revenge? The provocation t firſt of all be ſuch that we ſhould become emptible, and be expoſed to perpetual in-

ſults,

PART I. ſults, if we did not, in ſome meaſure, reſent it. Smaller offences are always better neglected; nor is there any thing more deſpicable than that froward and captious humour which takes fire upon every ſlight occaſion of quarrel. We ſhould reſent more from a ſenſe of the propriety of reſentment, from a ſenſe that mankind expect and require it of us, than becauſe we feel in ourſelves the furies of that diſagreeable paſſion. There is no paſſion, of which the human mind is capable, concerning whoſe juſtneſs we ought to be ſo doubtful, concerning whoſe indulgence we ought ſo carefully to conſult our natural ſenſe of propriety, or ſo diligently to conſider what will be the ſentiments of the cool and impartial ſpectator. Magnanimity, or a regard to maintain our own rank and dignity in ſociety, is the only motive which can ennoble the expreſſions of this diſagreeable paſſion. This motive muſt characterize our whole ſtyle and deportment. Theſe muſt be plain, open, and direct; determined without poſitiveneſs, and elevated without inſolence; not only free from petulance and low ſcurrility, but generous, candid, and full of all proper regards, even for the perſon who has offended us. It muſt appear, in ſhort, from our whole manner, without our labouring affectedly to expreſs it, that paſſion has not extinguiſhed our humanity; and that if we yield to the dictates of revenge, it is with reluctance, from neceſſity, and in conſequence of great and repeated provocations. When reſentment is guarded and qualified in this manner, it may be admitted to be even generous and noble.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

Of the ſocial Paſſions.

AS it is a divided ſympathy which renders the whole ſet of paſſions juſt now mentioned, upon moſt occaſions, ſo ungraceful and diſagreeable; ſo there is another ſet oppoſite to theſe, which a redoubled ſympathy renders almoſt always peculiarly agreeable and becoming. Generoſity, humanity, kindneſs, compaſſion, mutual friendſhip and eſteem, all the ſocial and benevolent affections, when expreſſed in the countenance or behaviour, even towards thoſe who are not peculiarly connected with ourſelves, pleaſe the indifferent ſpectator upon almoſt every occaſion. His ſympathy with the perſon who feels thoſe paſſions, exactly coincides with his concern for the perſon who is the object of them. The intereſt, which, as a man, he is obliged to take in the happineſs of this laſt, enlivens his fellow-feeling with the ſentiments of the other, whoſe emotions are employed about the ſame object. We have always, therefore, the ſtrongeſt diſpoſition to ſympathize with the benevolent affections. They appear in every reſpect agreeable to us. We enter into the ſatisfaction both of the perſon who feels them, and of the perſon who is the object of them. For as to be the object of hatred and indignation gives more pain than all the evil which a brave man

PART I. can fear from his enemies; ſo there is a ſatisfaction in the conſciouſneſs of being beloved, which, to a perſon of delicacy and ſenſibility, is of more importance to happineſs, than all the advantage which he can expect to derive from it. What character is ſo deteſtable as that of one who takes pleaſure to ſow diſſenſion among friends, and to turn their moſt tender love into mortal hatred? Yet wherein does the atrocity of this ſo much abhorred injury conſiſt? Is it in depriving them of the frivolous good offices, which, had their friendſhip continued, they might have expected from one another? It is in depriving them of that friendſhip itſelf, in robbing them of each other's affections, from which both derived ſo much ſatisfaction; it is in diſturbing the harmony of their hearts, and putting an end to that happy commerce which had before ſubſiſted between them. Theſe affections, that harmony, this commerce, are felt, not only by the tender and the delicate, but by the rudeſt vulgar of mankind, to be of more importance to happineſs than all the little ſervices which could be expected to flow from them.

The ſentiment of love is, in itſelf, agreeable to the perſon who feels it. It ſooths and compoſes the breaſt, ſeems to favour the vital motions, and to promote the healthful ſtate of the human conſtitution; and it is rendered ſtill more delightful by the conſciouſneſs of the gratitude and ſatisfaction which it muſt excite in him who is the object of it. Their mutual regard renders them happy in one another, and ſympathy,

ſympathy, with this mutual regard, makes them agreeable to every other perſon. With what pleaſure do we look upon a family, through the whole of which reign mutual love and eſteem, where the parents and children are companions for one another, without any other difference than what is made by reſpectful affection on the one ſide, and kind indulgence on the other; where freedom and fondneſs, mutual raillery and mutual kindneſs, ſhow that no oppoſition of intereſt divides the brothers, nor any rivalſhip of favour ſets the ſiſters at variance, and where every thing preſents us with the idea of peace, cheerfulneſs, harmony, and contentment? On the contrary, how uneaſy are we made when we go into a houſe in which jarring contention ſets one half of thoſe who dwell in it againſt the other; where, amidſt affected ſmoothneſs and complaiſance, ſuſpicious looks and ſudden ſtarts of paſſion betray the mutual jealouſies which burn within them, and which are every moment ready to burſt out through all the reſtraints which the preſence of the company impoſes?

Thoſe amiable paſſions, even when they are ackowledged to be exceſſive, are never regarded with averſion. There is ſomething agreeable even in the weakneſs of friendſhip and humanity. The too tender mother, the too indulgent father, the too generous and affectionate friend, may ſometimes, perhaps, on account of the ſoftneſs of their natures, be looked upon with a ſpecies of pity, in which, however, there is a mixture of love, but can never be regarded with hatred

 and

PART I. and averſion, nor even with contempt, unleſs by the moſt brutal and worthleſs of mankind. It is always with concern, with ſympathy and kindneſs, that we blame them for the extravagance of their attachment. There is a helpleſſneſs in the character of extreme humanity which more than any thing intereſts our pity. There is nothing in itſelf which renders it either ungraceful or diſagreeable. We only regret that it is unfit for the world, becauſe the world is unworthy of it, and becauſe it muſt expoſe the perſon who is endowed with it as a prey to the perfidy and ingratitude of inſinuating falſehood, and to a thouſand pains and uneaſineſſes, which, of all men, he the leaſt deſerves to feel, and which generally too he is, of all men, the leaſt capable of ſupporting. It is quite otherwiſe with hatred and reſentment. Too violent a propenſity to thoſe deteſtable paſſions, renders a perſon the object of univerſal dread and abhorrence, who, like a wild beaſt, ought, we think, to be hunted out of all civil ſociety.

CHAP. V.

Of the ſelfiſh Paſſions.

BESIDES thoſe two oppoſite ſets of paſſions, the ſocial and unſocial, there is another which holds a ſort of middle place between them; is never either ſo graceful as is ſome-

times the one ſet, nor is ever ſo odious as is ſometimes the other. Grief and joy, when conceived upon account of our own private good or bad fortune, conſtitute this third ſet of paſſions. Even when exceſſive, they are never ſo diſagreeable as exceſſive reſentment, becauſe no oppoſite ſympathy can ever intereſt us againſt them: and when moſt ſuitable to their objects, they are never ſo agreeable as impartial humanity and juſt benevolence; becauſe no double ſympathy can ever intereſt us for them. There is, however, this difference between grief and joy, that we are generally moſt diſpoſed to ſympathize with ſmall joys and great ſorrows. The man who, by ſome ſudden revolution of fortune, is lifted up all at once into a condition of life, greatly above what he had formerly lived in, may be aſſured that the congratulations of his beſt friends are not all of them perfectly ſincere. An upſtart, though of the greateſt merit, is generally diſagreeable, and a ſentiment of envy commonly prevents us from heartily ſympathizing with his joy. If he has any judgment, he is ſenſible of this, and inſtead of appearing to be elated with his good fortune, he endeavours, as much as he can, to ſmother his joy, and keep down that elevation of mind with which his new circumſtances naturally inſpire him. He affects the ſame plainneſs of dreſs, and the ſame modeſty of behaviour, which became him in his former ſtation. He redoubles his attention to his old friends, and endeavours more than ever to be humble, aſſiduous, and

PART I. and complaiſant. And this is the behaviour which in his ſituation we moſt approve of; becauſe we expect, it ſeems, that he ſhould have more ſympathy with our envy and averſion to his happineſs, than we have with his happineſs. It is ſeldom that with all this he ſucceeds. We ſuſpect the ſincerity of his humility, and he grows weary of this conſtraint. In a little time, therefore, he generally leaves all his old friends behind him, ſome of the meaneſt of them excepted, who may, perhaps, condeſcend to become his dependents: nor does he always acquire any new ones; the pride of his new connections is as much affronted at finding him their equal, as that of his old ones had been by his becoming their ſuperior: and it requires the moſt obſtinate and perſevering modeſty to atone for this mortification to either. He generally grows weary too ſoon, and is provoked, by the ſullen and ſuſpicious pride of the one, and by the ſaucy contempt of the other, to treat the firſt with neglect, and the ſecond with petulance, till at laſt he grows habitually inſolent, and forfeits the eſteem of all. If the chief part of human happineſs ariſes from the conſciouſneſs of being beloved, as I believe it does, thoſe ſudden changes of fortune ſeldom contribute much to happineſs. He is happieſt who advances more gradually to greatneſs, whom the public deſtines to every ſtep of his preferment long before he arrives at it, in whom, upon that account, when it comes, it can excite no extravagant joy, and with regard to whom it cannot reaſonably

reasonably create either any jealousy in those he overtakes, or any envy in those he leaves behind. SECT. II.

Mankind, however, more readily sympathize with those smaller joys which flow from less important causes. It is decent to be humble amidst great prosperity; but we can scarce express too much satisfaction in all the little occurrences of common life, in the company with which we spent the evening last night, in the entertainment that was set before us, in what was said and what was done, in all the little incidents of the present conversation, and in all those frivolous nothings which fill up the void of human life. Nothing is more graceful than habitual cheerfulness, which is always founded upon a peculiar relish for all the little pleasures which common occurrences afford. We readily sympathize with it: it inspires us with the same joy, and makes every trifle turn up to us in the same agreeable aspect in which it presents itself to the person endowed with this happy disposition. Hence it is that youth, the season of gaiety, so easily engages our affections. That propensity to joy which seems even to animate the bloom, and to sparkle from the eyes of youth and beauty, though in a person of the same sex, exalts, even the aged, to a more joyous mood than ordinary. They forget, for a time, their infirmities, and abandon themselves to those agreeable ideas and emotions to which they have long been strangers, but which, when the presence of so much happiness recalls them

PART I. to their breaſt, take their place there, like old acquaintance, from whom they are ſorry to have ever been parted, and whom they embrace more heartily upon account of this long ſeparation.

It is quite otherwiſe with grief. Small vexations excite no ſympathy, but deep affliction calls forth the greateſt. The man who is made uneaſy by every little diſagreeable incident, who is hurt if either the cook or the butler have failed in the leaſt article of their duty, who feels every defect in the higheſt ceremonial of politeneſs, whether it be ſhewn to himſelf or to any other perſon, who takes it amiſs that his intimate friend did not bid him good-morrow when they met in the forenoon, and that his brother hummed a tune all the time he himſelf was telling a ſtory; who is put out of humour by the badneſs of the weather when in the country, by the badneſs of the roads when upon a journey, and by the want of company, and dulneſs of all public diverſions when in town; ſuch a perſon, I ſay, though he ſhould have ſome reaſon, will ſeldom meet with much ſympathy. Joy is a pleaſant emotion, and we gladly abandon ourſelves to it upon the ſlighteſt occaſion. We readily, therefore, ſympathize with it in others, whenever we are not prejudiced by envy. But grief is painful, and the mind, even when it is our own misfortune, naturally reſiſts and recoils from it. We would endeavour either not to conceive it at all, or to ſhake it off as ſoon as we have conceived it. Our averſion to grief will not, indeed, always hinder us from con-

ceiving it in our own caſe upon very trifling occaſions, but it conſtantly prevents us from ſympathizing with it in others when excited by the like frivolous cauſes: for our ſympathetic paſſions are always leſs irreſiſtible than our original ones. There is, beſides, a malice in mankind, which not only prevents all ſympathy with little uneaſineſſes, but renders them in ſome meaſure diverting. Hence the delight which we all take in raillery, and in the ſmall vexation which we obſerve in our companion, when he is puſhed, and urged, and teaſed upon all ſides. Men of the moſt ordinary good-breeding diſſemble the pain which any little incident may give them; and thoſe who are more thoroughly formed to ſociety, turn, of their own accord, all ſuch incidents into raillery, as they know their companions will do for them. The habit which a man, who lives in the world, has acquired of conſidering how every thing that concerns himſelf will appear to others, makes thoſe frivolous calamities turn up in the ſame ridiculous light to him, in which he knows they will certainly be conſidered by them.

Our ſympathy, on the contrary, with deep diſtreſs, is very ſtrong and very ſincere. It is unneceſſary to give an inſtance. We weep even at the feigned repreſentation of a tragedy. If you labour, therefore, under any ſignal calamity, if by ſome extraordinary misfortune you are fallen into poverty, into diſeaſes, into diſgrace and diſappointment; even though your own fault may have been, in part, the occaſion, yet

PART I. you may generally depend upon the ſincereſt ſympathy of all your friends, and, as far as intereſt and honour will permit, upon their kindeſt aſſiſtance too. But if your misfortune is not of this dreadful kind, if you have only been a little baulked in your ambition, if you have only been jilted by your miſtreſs, or are only hen-pecked by your wife, lay your account with the raillery of all your acquaintance.

SECTION III.

OF THE EFFECTS OF PROSPERITY AND ADVERSITY UPON THE JUDGMENT OF MANKIND WITH REGARD TO THE PROPRIETY OF ACTION; AND WHY IT IS MORE EASY TO OBTAIN THEIR APPROBATION IN THE ONE STATE THAN IN THE OTHER.

CHAP. I.

That though our ſympathy with ſorrow is generally a more lively ſenſation than our ſympathy with joy, it commonly falls much more ſhort of the violence of what is naturally felt by the perſon principally concerned.

SECT. III.

OUR ſympathy with ſorrow, though not more real, has been more taken notice of than our ſympathy with joy. The word ſympathy, in its moſt proper and primitive ſignification, denotes our fellow-feeling with the ſufferings, not that with the enjoyments, of others. A late ingenious and ſubtile philoſopher thought it neceſſary to prove, by arguments, that we had a real ſympathy with joy, and that congratulation was a principle of human nature. Nobody, I believe, ever thought it neceſſary to prove that compaſſion was ſuch.

Firſt of all, our ſympathy with ſorrow is, in ſome ſenſe, more univerſal than that with joy. Though ſorrow is exceſſive, we may ſtill have ſome fellow-feeling with it. What we feel does

r not, indeed, in this caſe, amount to that com-
plete ſympathy, to that perfect harmony and
correſpondence of ſentiments which conſtitutes
approbation. We do not weep, and exclaim,
and lament, with the ſufferer. We are ſenſible,
on the contrary, of his weakneſs and of the ex-
travagance of his paſſion, and yet often feel
a very ſenſible concern upon his account. But
if we do not entirely enter into, and go along
with, the joy of another, we have no ſort of
regard or fellow-feeling for it. The man who
ſkips and dances about with that intemperate
and ſenſeleſs joy which we cannot accompany
him in, is the object of our contempt and indig-
nation.

Pain beſides, whether of mind or body, is a
more pungent ſenſation than pleaſure, and our
ſympathy with pain, though it falls greatly
ſhort of what is naturally felt by the ſufferer, i
generally a more lively and diſtinct perceptio
than our ſympathy with pleaſure, though th
laſt often approaches more nearly, as I ſha
ſhew immediately, to the natural vivacity of t
original paſſion.

Over and above all this, we often ſtruggle
keep down our ſympathy with the ſorrow
others. Whenever we are not under the ob
vation of the ſufferer, we endeavour, for
own ſake, to ſuppreſs it as much as we can,
we are not always ſucceſsful. The oppof
which we make to it, and the reluctance
which we yield to it, neceſſarily oblige
take more particular notice of it. But we

have occaſion to make this oppoſition to our ſympathy with joy. If there is any envy in the caſe, we never feel the leaſt propenſity towards it; and if there is none, we give way to it without any reluctance. On the contrary, as we are always aſhamed of our own envy, we often pretend, and ſometimes really wiſh to ſympathize with the joy of others, when by that diſagreeable ſentiment we are diſqualified from doing ſo. We are glad, we ſay, on account of our neighbour's good fortune, when in our hearts, perhaps, we are really ſorry. We often feel a ſympathy with ſorrow when we would wiſh to be rid of it; and we often miſs that with joy when we would be glad to have it. The obvious obſervation, therefore, which it naturally falls in our way to make, is, that our propenſity to ſympathize with ſorrow muſt be very ſtrong, and our inclination to ſympathize with joy very weak.

Notwithſtanding this prejudice, however, I will venture to affirm, that, when there is no envy in the caſe, our propenſity to ſympathize with joy is much ſtronger than our propenſity to ſympathize with ſorrow; and that our fellow-feeling for the agreeable emotion approaches much more nearly to the vivacity of what is naturally felt by the perſons principally concerned, than that which we conceive for the painful one.

We have ſome indulgence for that exceſſive grief which we cannot entirely go along with. We know what a prodigious effort is requiſite before the ſufferer can bring down his emotions

PART I. to complete harmony and concord with those of the spectator. Though he fails, therefore, we easily pardon him. But we have no such indulgence for the intemperance of joy; because we are not conscious that any such vast effort is requisite to bring it down to what we can entirely enter into. The man who, under the greatest calamities, can command his sorrow, seems worthy of the highest admiration; but he who, in the fulness of prosperity, can in the same manner master his joy, seems hardly to deserve any praise. We are sensible that there is a much wider interval in the one case than in the other, between what is naturally felt by the person principally concerned, and what the spectator can entirely go along with.

What can be added to the happiness of the man who is in health, who is out of debt, and has a clear conscience? To one in this situation, all accessions of fortune may properly be said to be superfluous; and if he is much elevated upon account of them, it must be the effect of the most frivolous levity. This situation, however, may very well be called the natural and ordinary state of mankind. Nothwithstanding the present misery and depravity of the world, so justly lamented, this really is the state of the greater part of men. The greater part of men, therefore, cannot find any great difficulty in elevating themselves to all the joy which any accession to this situation can well excite in their companion.

But though little can be added to this state, much may be taken from it. Though between

this condition and the highest pitch of human prosperity, the interval is but a trifle; between it and the lowest depth of misery the distance is immense and prodigious. Adversity, on this account, necessarily depresses the mind of the sufferer much more below its natural state, than prosperity can elevate him above it. The spectator, therefore, must find it much more difficult to sympathize entirely, and keep perfect time, with his sorrow, than thoroughly to enter into his joy, and must depart much further from his own natural and ordinary temper of mind in the one case than in the other. It is on this account, that though our sympathy with sorrow is often a more pungent sensation than our sympathy with joy, it always falls much more short of the violence of what is naturally felt by the person principally concerned.

It is agreeable to sympathize with joy; and wherever envy does not oppose it, our heart abandons itself with satisfaction to the highest transports of that delightful sentiment. But it is painful to go along with grief, and we always enter into it with reluctance *. When we attend

* It has been objected to me that as I found the sentiment of approbation, which is always agreeable, upon sympathy, it is inconsistent with my system to admit any disagreeable sympathy. I answer, that in the sentiment of approbation there are two things to be taken notice of; first, the sympathetic passion of the spectator; and secondly, the emotion which arises from his observing the perfect coincidence between this sympathetic passion in himself, and the original passion in the person principally concerned. This last emotion, in which the sentiment of approbation properly consists, is always agreeable and delightful. The other may either be agreeable or disagreeable, according to the nature of the original passion, whose features it must always, in some measure, retain.

PART I. to the repreſentation of a tragedy, we ſtruggle againſt that ſympathetic ſorrow which the entertainment inſpires as long as we can, and we give way to it at laſt only when we can no longer avoid it: we even then endeavour to cover our concern from the company. If we ſhed any tears, we carefully conceal them, and are afraid, leſt the ſpectators, not entering into this exceſſive tenderneſs, ſhould regard it as effeminacy and weakneſs. The wretch whoſe misfortunes call upon our compaſſion feels with what reluctance we are likely to enter into his ſorrow, and therefore propoſes his grief to us with fear and heſitation: he even ſmothers the half of it, and is aſhamed, upon account of this hard-heartedneſs of mankind, to give vent to the fulneſs of his affliction. It is otherwiſe with the man who riots in joy and ſucceſs. Wherever envy does not intereſt us againſt him, he expects our completeſt ſympathy. He does not fear, therefore, to announce himſelf with ſhouts of exultation, in full confidence that we are heartily diſpoſed to go along with him.

Why ſhould we be more aſhamed to weep than to laugh before company? We may often have as real occaſion to do the one as to do the other: but we always feel that the ſpectators are more likely to go along with us in the agreeable, than in the painful emotion. It is always miſerable to complain, even when we are oppreſſed by the moſt dreadful calamities. But the triumph of victory is not always ungraceful. Prudence, indeed, would often adviſe us to bear our proſpe-

ſity with more moderation; becauſe prudence would teach us to avoid that envy which this very triumph is, more than any thing, apt to excite.

How hearty are the acclamations of the mob, who never bear any envy to their ſuperiors, at a triumph or a public entry? And how ſedate and moderate is commonly their grief at an execution? Our ſorrow at a funeral generally amounts to no more than an effected gravity; but our mirth at a chriſtening or a marriage, is always from the heart, and without any affectation. Upon theſe, and all ſuch joyous occaſions, our ſatisfaction, though not ſo durable, is often as lively as that of the perſons principally concerned. Whenever we cordially congratulate our friends, which, however, to the diſgrace of human nature, we do but ſeldom, their joy literally becomes our joy: we are, for the moment, as happy as they are: our heart ſwells and overflows with real pleaſure: joy and complacency ſparkle from our eyes, and animate every feature of our countenance, and every geſture of our body.

But on the contrary, when we condole with our friends in their afflictions, how little do we feel, in compariſon of what they feel? We ſit down by them, we look at them, and while they relate to us the circumſtances of their misfortune, we liſten to them with gravity and attention. But while their narration is every moment interrupted by thoſe natural burſts of paſſion which often ſeem almoſt to choak them in the midſt of it;

PART I. it; how far are the languid emotions of our hearts from keeping time to the tranſports of theirs? We may be ſenſible, at the ſame time, that their paſſion is natural, and no greater than what we ourſelves might feel upon the like occaſion. We may even inwardly reproach ourſelves with our own want of ſenſibility, and perhaps, on that account, work ourſelves up into an artificial ſympathy, which, however, when it is raiſed, is always the ſlighteſt and moſt tranſitory imaginable; and generally, as ſoon as we have left the room, vaniſhes, and is gone for ever. Nature, it ſeems, when ſhe loaded us with our own ſorrows, thought they were enough, and therefore did not command us to take any further ſhare in thoſe of others, than what was neceſſary to prompt us to relieve them.

It is on account of this dull ſenſibility to the afflictions of others, that magnanimity amidſt great diſtreſs appears always ſo divinely graceful. His behaviour is genteel and agreeable who can maintain his cheerfulneſs amidſt a number of frivolous diſaſters. But he appears to be more than mortal who can ſupport in the ſame manner the moſt dreadful calamities. We feel what an immenſe effort is requiſite to ſilence thoſe violent emotions which naturally agitate and diſtract thoſe in his ſituation. We are amazed to find that he can command himſelf ſo entirely. His firmneſs, at the ſame time, perfectly coincides with our inſenſibility. He makes no demand upon us for that more exquiſite degree of ſenſibility which we find, and which we are mor-

tified to find, that we do not poſſeſs. There is the moſt perfect correſpondence between his ſentiments and ours, and on that account the moſt perfect propriety in his behaviour. It is a propriety too, which, from our experience of the uſual weakneſs of human nature, we could not reaſonably have expected he ſhould be able to maintain. We wonder with ſurpriſe and aſtoniſhment at that ſtrength of mind which is capable of ſo noble and generous an effort. The ſentiment of complete ſympathy and approbation, mixed and animated with wonder and ſurpriſe, conſtitutes what is properly called admiration, as has already been more than once taken notice of. Cato, ſurrounded on all ſides by his enemies, unable to reſiſt them, diſdaining to ſubmit to them, and reduced, by the proud maxims of that age, to the neceſſity of deſtroying himſelf; yet never ſhrinking from his misfortunes, never ſupplicating with the lamentable voice of wretchedneſs, thoſe miſerable ſympathetic tears which we are always ſo unwilling to give; but on the contrary, arming himſelf with manly fortitude, and the moment before he executes his fatal reſolution, giving, with his uſual tranquillity, all neceſſary orders for the ſafety of his friends; appears to Seneca, that great preacher of inſenſibility, a ſpectacle which even the gods themſelves might behold with pleaſure and admiration.

Whenever we meet, in common life, with any examples of ſuch heroic magnanimity, we are always extremely affected. We are more apt to weep and ſhed tears for ſuch as, in this manner, ſeem

PART I.

ſeem to feel nothing for themſelves, than for thoſe who give way to all the weakneſs of ſorrow: and in this particular caſe, the ſympathetic grief of the ſpectator appears to go beyond the original paſſion in the perſon principally concerned. The friends of Socrates all wept when he drank the laſt potion, while he himſelf expreſſed the gayeſt and moſt cheerful tranquillity. Upon all ſuch occaſions the ſpectator makes no effort, and has no occaſion to make any, in order to conquer his ſympathetic ſorrow. He is under no fear that it will tranſport him to any thing that is extravagant and improper; he is rather pleaſed with the ſenſibility of his own heart, and gives way to it with complacence and ſelf-approbation. He gladly indulges, therefore, the moſt melancholy views which can naturally occur to him, concerning the calamity of his friend, for whom, perhaps, he never felt ſo exquiſitely before, the tender and tearful paſſion of love. But it is quite otherwiſe with the perſon principally concerned. He is obliged, as much as poſſible, to turn away his eyes from whatever is either naturally terrible or diſagreeable in his ſituation. Too ſerious an attention to thoſe circumſtances, he fears, might make ſo violent an impreſſion upon him, that he could no longer keep within the bounds of moderation, or render himſelf the object of the complete ſympathy and approbation of the ſpectators. He fixes his thoughts, therefore, upon thoſe only which are agreeable, the applauſe and admiration which he is about to deſerve by the heroic magnanimity of his behaviour. To feel

that he is c e ſo noble and generous an effort, to feel that in this dreadful ſituation he can ſtill act as he would deſire to act, animates and tranſports him with joy, and enables him to ſupport that triumphant gaiety which ſeems to exult in the victory he thus gains over his misfortunes.

On the contrary, he always appears, in ſome meaſure, mean and deſpicable, who is ſunk in ſorrow and dejection upon account of any calamity of his own. We cannot bring ourſelves to feel for him what he feels for himſelf, and what, perhaps, we ſhould feel for ourſelves if in his ſituation: we, therefore, deſpiſe him; unjuſtly perhaps, if any ſentiment could be regarded as unjuſt, to which we are by nature irreſiſtibly determined. The weakneſs of ſorrow never appears in any reſpect agreeable, except when it ariſes from what we feel for others more than from what we feel for ourſelves. A ſon, upon the death of an indulgent and reſpectable father, may give way to it without much blame. His ſorrow is chiefly founded upon a ſort of ſympathy with his departed parent; and we readily enter into this humane emotion. But if he ſhould indulge the ſame weakneſs upon account of any misfortune which affected himſelf only, he would no longer meet with any ſuch indulgence. If he ſhould be reduced to beggary and ruin, if he ſhould be expoſed to the moſt dreadful dangers, if he ſhould even be led out to a public execution, and there ſhed one ſingle tear upon the ſcaffold, he would diſgrace himſelf for ever in the

PART I. the opinion of all the gallant and generous part of mankind. Their compaſſion for him, however, would be very ſtrong, and very ſincere; but as it would ſtill fall ſhort of this exceſſive weakneſs, they would have no pardon for the man who could thus expoſe himſelf in the eyes of the world. His behaviour would affect them with ſhame rather than with ſorrow; and the diſhonour which he had thus brought upon himſelf would appear to them the moſt lamentable circumſtance in his misfortune. How did it diſgrace the memory of the intrepid Duke of Biron, who had ſo often braved death in the field, that he wept upon the ſcaffold, when he beheld the ſtate to which he was fallen, and remembered the favour and the glory from which his own raſhneſs had ſo unfortunately thrown him?

CHAP. II.

Of the origin of Ambition, and of the diſtinction of Ranks.

IT is becauſe mankind are diſpoſed to ſympathize more entirely with our joy than with our ſorrow, that we make parade of our riches, and conceal our poverty. Nothing is ſo mortifying as to be obliged to expoſe our diſtreſs to the view of the public, and to feel, that though our ſituation is open to the eyes of all mankind, no mortal conceives for us the half of what we ſuffer

ſuffer. Nay it is chiefly from this regard to the ſentiments of mankind, that we purſue riches and avoid poverty. For to what purpoſe is all the toil and buſtle of this world? what is the end of avarice and ambition, of the purſuit of wealth, of power, and preheminence? Is it to ſupply the neceſſities of nature? The wages of the meaneſt labourer can ſupply them. We ſee that they afford him food and clothing, the comfort of a houſe, and of a family. If we examine his œconomy with rigour, we ſhould find that he ſpends a great part of them upon conveniences, which may be regarded as ſuperfluities, and that, upon extraordinary occaſions, he can give ſomething even to vanity and diſtinction. What then is the cauſe of our averſion to his ſituation, and why ſhould thoſe who have been educated in the higher ranks of life, regard it as worſe than death, to be reduced to live, even without labour, upon the ſame ſimple fare with him, to dwell under the ſame lowly roof, and to be clothed in the ſame humble attire? Do they imagine that their ſtomach is better, or their ſleep ſounder in a palace than in a cottage? The contrary has been ſo often obſerved, and, indeed, is ſo very obvious, though it had never been obſerved, that there is nobody ignorant of it. From whence, then, ariſes that emulation which runs through all the different ranks of men, and what are the advantages which we propoſe by that great purpoſe of human life which we call bettering our condition? To be obſerved, to be attended to, to be taken notice of with ſympathy,

PART I. complacency, and approbation, are all the advantages which we can propose to derive from it. It is the vanity, not the ease, or the pleasure, which interests us. But vanity is always founded upon the belief of our being the object of attention and approbation. The rich man glories in his riches, because he feels that they naturally draw upon him the attention of the world, and that mankind are disposed to go along with him in all those agreeable emotions with which the advantages of his situation so readily inspire him. At the thought of this, his heart seems to swell and dilate itself within him, and he is fonder of his wealth, upon this account, than for all the other advantages it procures him. The poor man, on the contrary, is ashamed of his poverty. He feels that it either places him out of the sight of mankind, or, that if they take any notice of him, they have, however, scarce any fellow-feeling with the misery and distress which he suffers. He is mortified upon both accounts; for though to be overlooked, and to be disapproved of, are things entirely different, yet as obscurity covers us from the daylight of honour and approbation, to feel that we are taken no notice of, necessarily damps the most agreeable hope, and disappoints the most ardent desire, of human nature. The poor man goes out and comes in unheeded, and when in the midst of a crowd is in the same obscurity as if shut up in his own hovel. Those humble cares and painful attentions which occupy those in his situation, afford no amusement to the dissipated and the gay

ay. They turn away their eyes from him, or f the extremity of his diſtreſs forces them to ook at him, it is only to ſpurn ſo diſagreeable an bject from among them. The fortunate and he proud wonder at the inſolence of human retchedneſs, that it ſhould dare to preſent itſelf efore them, and with the loathſome aſpect of its iſery preſume to diſturb the ſerenity of their appineſs. The man of rank and diſtinction, on he contrary, is obſerved by all the world. Every body is eager to look at him, and to conceive, at leaſt by ſympathy, that joy and exultaion with which his circumſtances naturally nſpire him. His actions are the objects of the ublic care. Scarce a word, ſcarce a geſture, an fall from him that is altogether neglected. n a great aſſembly he is the perſon upon whom ll direct their eyes; it is upon him that their affions ſeem all to wait with expectation, in rder to receive that movement and direction hich he ſhall impreſs upon them; and if his ehaviour is not altogether abſurd, he has, every oment, an opportunity of intereſting mankind, nd of rendering himſelf the object of the obſerration and fellow feeling of every body about im. It is this, which, notwithſtanding the retraint it impoſes, notwithſtanding the loſs of iberty with which it is attended, renders greatneſs the object of envy, and compenſates, in the opinion of mankind, all that toil, all that anxiety, all thoſe mortifications which muſt be undergone in the purſuit of it; and what is of yet more conſequence, all that leiſure, all that eaſe, all that

PART I. careleſs ſecurity, which are forfeited for ever by the acquiſition.

When we conſider the condition of the great, in thoſe deluſive colours in which the imagination is apt to paint it, it ſeems to be almoſt the abſtract idea of a perfect and happy ſtate. It is the very ſtate which, in all our waking dreams and idle reveries, we had ſketched out to ourſelves as the final object of all our deſires. We feel, therefore, a peculiar ſympathy with the ſatisfaction of thoſe who are in it. We favour all their inclinations, and forward all their wiſhes. What pity, we think, that any thing ſhould ſpoil and corrupt ſo agreeable a ſituation! We could even wiſh them immortal; and it ſeems hard to us, that death ſhould at laſt put an end to ſuch perfect enjoyment. It is cruel, we think, in Nature to compel them from their exalted ſtations to that humble, but hoſpitable home, which ſhe has provided for all her children. Great King, live for ever! is the compliment, which, after the manner of eaſtern adulation, we ſhould readily make them, if experience did not teach us its abſurdity. Every calamity that befals them, every injury that is done them, excites in the breaſt of the ſpectator ten times more compaſſion and reſentment than he would have felt, had the ſame things happened to other men. It is the misfortunes of Kings only which afford the proper ſubjects for tragedy. They reſemble in this reſpect, the misfortunes of lovers. Thoſe two ſituations are the chief which intereſt us upon the theatre; becauſe, in ſpite of all that reaſon

reaſon and experience can tell us to the contrary, the prejudices of the imagination attach to theſe two ſtates a happineſs ſuperior to any other. To diſturb, or to put an end to ſuch perfect enjoyment, ſeems to be the moſt atrocious of all injuries. The traitor who conſpires againſt the life of his monarch, is thought a greater monſter than any other murderer. All the innocent blood that was ſhed in the civil wars, provoked leſs indignation than the death of Charles I. A ſtranger to human nature, who ſaw the indifference of men about the miſery of their inferiors, and the regret and indignation which they feel for the misfortunes and ſufferings of thoſe above them, would be apt to imagine, that pain muſt be more agonizing, and the convulſions of death more terrible to perſons of higher rank, than to thoſe of meaner ſtations.

Upon this diſpoſition of mankind, to go along with all the paſſions of the rich and the powerful, is founded the diſtinction of ranks, and the order of ſociety. Our obſequiouſneſs to our ſuperiors more frequently ariſes from our admiration for the advantages of their ſituation, than from any private expectations of benefit from their good-will. Their benefits can extend but to a few; but their fortunes intereſt almoſt every body. We are eager to aſſiſt them in completing a ſyſtem of happineſs that approaches ſo near to perfection; and we deſire to ſerve them for their own ſake, without any other recompenſe but the vanity or the honour of obliging them. Neither is our deference to their inclinations

PART I. founded chiefly, or altogether, upon a regard to the utility of ſuch ſubmiſſion, and to the order of ſociety, which is beſt ſupported by it. Even when the order of ſociety ſeems to require that we ſhould oppoſe them, we can hardly bring ourſelves to do it. That kings are the ſervants of the people, to be obeyed, reſiſted, depoſed, or puniſhed, as the public conveniency may require, is the doctrine of reaſon and philoſophy; but it is not the doctrine of nature. Nature would teach us to ſubmit to them for their own ſake, to tremble and bow down before their exalted ſtation, to regard their ſmile as a reward ſufficient to compenſate any ſervices, and to dread their diſpleaſure, though no other evil were to follow from it, as the ſevereſt of all mortifications. To treat them in any reſpect as men, to reaſon and diſpute with them upon ordinary occaſions, requires ſuch reſolution, that there are few men whoſe magnanimity can ſupport them in it, unleſs they are likewiſe aſſiſted by familiarity and acquaintance. The ſtrongeſt motives, the moſt furious paſſions, fear, hatred, and reſentment, are ſcarce ſufficient to balance this natural diſpoſition to reſpect them: and their conduct muſt, either juſtly or unjuſtly, have excited the higheſt degree of all thoſe paſſions, before the bulk of the people can be brought to oppoſe them with violence, or to deſire to ſee them either puniſhed or depoſed. Even when the people have been brought this length, they are apt to relent every moment, and eaſily relapſe into their habitual ſtate of deference to thoſe whom they have

have been accuſtomed to look upon as their natural ſuperiors. They cannot ſtand the mortification of their monarch. Compaſſion ſoon takes the place of reſentment, they forget all paſt provocations, their old principles of loyalty revive, and they run to re-eſtabliſh the ruined authority of their old maſters, with the ſame violence with which they had oppoſed it. The death of Charles I. brought about the Reſtoration of the royal family. Compaſſion for James II., when he was ſeized by the populace in making his eſcape on ſhip-board, had almoſt prevented the Revolution, and made it go on more heavily than before.

Do the great ſeem inſenſible of the eaſy price at which they may acquire the public admiration; or do they ſeem to imagine that to them, as to other men, it muſt be the purchaſe either of ſweat or of blood? By what important accompliſhments is the young nobleman inſtructed to ſupport the dignity of his rank, and to render himſelf worthy of that ſuperiority over his fellow citizens, to which the virtue of his anceſtors had raiſed them: Is it by knowledge, by induſtry, by patience, by ſelf-denial, or by virtue of any kind? As all his words, as all his motions are attended to, he learns an habitual regard to every circumſtance of ordinary behaviour, and ſtudies to perform all thoſe ſmall duties with the moſt exact propriety. As he is conſcious how much he is obſerved, and how much mankind are diſpoſed to favour all his inclinations, he acts, upon the moſt indifferent occaſions, with

PART I. that freedom and elevation which the thought of this naturally inſpires. His air, his manner, his deportment, all mark that elegant and graceful ſenſe of his own ſuperiority, which thoſe who are born to inferior ſtations can hardly ever arrive at. Theſe are the arts by which he propoſes to make mankind more eaſily ſubmit to his authority, and to govern their inclinations according to his own pleaſure: and in this he is ſeldom diſappointed. Theſe arts, ſupported by rank and preheminence, are, upon ordinary occaſions, ſufficient to govern the world. Lewis XIV. during the greater part of his reign, was regarded, not only in France, but over all Europe, as the moſt perfect model of a great prince. But what were the talents and virtues by which he acquired this great reputation? Was it by the ſcrupulous and inflexible juſtice of all his undertakings, by the immenſe dangers and difficulties with which they were attended, or by the unwearied and unrelenting application with which he purſued them? Was it by his extenſive knowledge, by his exquiſite judgment, or by his heroic valour? It was by none of theſe qualities. But he was, firſt of all, the moſt powerful prince in Europe, and conſequently held the higheſt rank among kings; and then ſays his hiſtorian, "he "ſurpaſſed all his courtiers in the gracefulneſs "of his ſhape, and the majeſtic beauty of his features. The ſound of his voice, noble and affecting, gained thoſe hearts which his preſence "intimidated. He had a ſtep and a deportment "which could ſuit only him and his rank, and

"which

which would have been ridiculous in any other perſon. The embarraſſment which he occaſioned to thoſe who ſpoke to him, flattered that ſecret ſatisfaction with which he felt his own ſuperiority. The old officer, who was confounded and faultered in aſking him a favour, and not being able to conclude his diſcourſe, ſaid to him: Sir, your majeſty, I hope, will believe that I do not tremble thus before your enemies: had no difficulty to obtain what he demanded." Theſe frivolous compliſhments, ſupported by his rank, and, doubt too, by a degree of other talents and rtues, which ſeems, however, not to have been uch above mediocrity, eſtabliſhed this prince the eſteem of his own age, and have drawn, en from poſterity, a good deal of reſpect for s memory. Compared with theſe, in his own mes, and in his own preſence, no other virtue, ſeems, appeared to have any merit. Knowdge, induſtry, valour, and beneficence tremed, were abaſhed, and loſt all dignity before iem.

But it is not by accompliſhments of this kind, at the man of inferior rank muſt hope to diſnguiſh himſelf. Politeneſs is ſo much the virtue the great, that it will do little honour to any ody but themſelves. The coxcomb, who imites their manner, and affects to be eminent by e ſuperior propriety of his ordinary behaviour, rewarded with a double ſhare of contempt for is folly and preſumption. Why ſhould the nan, whom nobody thinks it worth while to look at,

PART I. at, be very anxious about the manner in which he holds up his head, or diſpoſes of his arms while he walks through a room? He is occupied ſurely with a very ſuperfluous attention, and with an attention too that marks a ſenſe of his own importance, which no other mortal can go along with. The moſt perfect modeſty and plainneſs, joined to as much negligence as is conſiſtent with the reſpect due to the company, ought to be the chief characteriſtics of the behaviour of a private man. If ever he hopes to diſtinguiſh himſelf, it muſt be by more important virtues. He muſt acquire dependants to balance the dependants of the great, and he has no other fund to pay them from, but the labour of his body, and the activity of his mind. He muſt cultivate theſe therefore: he muſt acquire ſuperior knowledge in his profeſſion, and ſuperior induſtry in the exerciſe of it. He muſt be patient in labour, reſolute in danger, and firm in diſtreſs. Theſe talents he muſt bring into public view, by the difficulty, importance, and at the ſame time, good judgment of his undertakings, and by the ſevere and unrelenting application, with which he purſues them. Probity and prudence, generoſity and frankneſs, muſt characterize his behaviour upon all ordinary occaſions; and he muſt, at the ſame time, be forward to engage in all thoſe ſituations, in which it requires the greateſt talents and virtues to act with propriety, but in which the greateſt applauſe is to be acquired by thoſe who can acquit themſelves with honour. With what

impatience

impatience does the man of ſpirit and ambition, who is depreſſed by his ſituation, look round for ſome great opportunity to diſtinguiſh himſelf? No circumſtances, which can afford this, appear to him undeſirable. He even looks forward with ſatisfaction to the proſpect of foreign war, or civil diſſenſion; and, with ſecret tranſport and delight, ſees through all the confuſion and bloodſhed which attend them, the probability of thoſe wiſhed-for occaſions preſenting themſelves, in which he may draw upon himſelf the attention and admiration of mankind. The man of rank and diſtinction, on the contrary, whoſe whole glory conſiſts in the propriety of his ordinary behaviour, who is contented with the humble renown which this can afford him, and has no talents to acquire any other, is unwilling to embarraſs himſelf with what can be attended either with difficulty or diſtreſs. To figure at a ball is his great triumph, and to ſucceed in an intrigue of gallantry, his higheſt exploit. He has an averſion to all public confuſions, not from the love of mankind, for the great never look upon their inferiors as their fellow-creatures; nor yet from want of courage, for in that he is ſeldom defective; but from a conſciouſneſs that he poſſeſſes none of the virtues which are required in ſuch ſituations, and that the public attention will certainly be drawn away from him by others. He may be willing to expoſe himſelf to ſome little danger, and to make a campaign when it happens to be the faſhion. But he ſhudders with horror at the thought of any ſituation which demands

PART I. demands the continual and long exertion of patience, induſtry, fortitude, and application of thought. Theſe virtues are hardly ever to be met with in men who are born to thoſe high ſtations. In all governments, accordingly, even in monarchies, the higheſt offices are generally poſſeſſed, and the whole detail of the adminiſtration conducted, by men who were educated in the middle and inferior ranks of life, who have been carried forward by their own induſtry and abilities, though loaded with the jealouſy, and oppoſed by the reſentment, of all thoſe who were born their ſuperiors, and to whom the great, after having regarded them firſt with contempt, and afterwards with envy, are at laſt contented to truckle with the ſame abject meanneſs with which they deſire that the reſt of mankind ſhould behave to themſelves.

It is the loſs of this eaſy empire over the affections of mankind which renders the fall from greatneſs ſo inſupportable. When the family of the king of Macedon was led in triumph by Paulus Æmilius, their misfortunes, it is ſaid, made them divide with their conqueror the attention of the Roman people. The ſight of the royal children, whoſe tender age rendered them inſenſible of their ſituation, ſtruck the ſpectators, amidſt the public rejoicings and proſperity, with the tendereſt ſorrow and compaſſion. The king appeared next in the proceſſion; and ſeemed like one confounded and aſtoniſhed, and bereft of all ſentiment, by the greatneſs of his calamities. His friends and miniſters followed after him.

him. As they moved along, they often caſt their eyes upon their fallen ſovereign, and always burſt into tears at the ſight; their whole behaviour demonſtrating that they thought not of their own misfortunes, but were occupied entirely by the ſuperior greatneſs of his. The generous Romans, on the contrary, beheld him with diſdain and indignation, and regarded as unworthy of all compaſſion the man who could be ſo mean-ſpirited as to bear to live under ſuch calamities. Yet what did thoſe calamities amount to? According to the greater part of hiſtorians, he was to ſpend the remainder of his days, under the protection of a powerful and humane people, in a ſtate which in itſelf ſhould ſeem worthy of envy, a ſtate of plenty, eaſe, leiſure, and ſecurity, from which it was impoſſible for him even by his own folly to fall. But he was no longer to be ſurrounded by that admiring mob of fools, flatterers, and dependants, who had formerly been accuſtomed to attend upon all his motions. He was no longer to be gazed upon by multitudes, nor to have it in his power to render himſelf the object of their reſpect, their gratitude, their love, their admiration. The paſſions of nations were no longer to mould themſelves upon his inclinations. This was that inſupportable calamity which bereaved the king of all ſentiment; which made his friends forget their own misfortunes; and which the Roman magnanimity could ſcarce conceive how any man could be ſo mean-ſpirited as to bear to ſurvive.

"Love,"

PART I.

"Love," ſays my Lord Rochefaucault, is "commonly ſucceeded by ambition; but ambition is hardly ever ſucceeded by love." That paſſion, when once it has got entire poſſeſſion of the breaſt, will admit neither a rival nor a ſucceſſor. To thoſe who have been accuſtomed to the poſſeſſion, or even to the hope of public admiration, all other pleaſures ſicken and decay. Of all the diſcarded ſtateſmen who for their own eaſe have ſtudied to get the better of ambition, and to deſpiſe thoſe honours which they could no longer arrive at, how few have been able to ſucceed? The greater part have ſpent their time in the moſt liſtleſs and inſipid indolence, chagrined at the thoughts of their own inſignificancy, incapable of being intereſted in the occupations of private life, without enjoyment, except when they talked of their former greatneſs, and without ſatisfaction, except when they were employed in ſome vain project to recover it. Are you in earneſt reſolved never to barter your liberty for the lordly ſervitude of a court, but to live free, fearleſs, and independent? There ſeems to be one way to continue in that virtuous reſolution; and perhaps but one. Never enter the place from whence ſo few have been able to return; never come within the circle of ambition; nor ever bring yourſelf into compariſon with thoſe maſters of the earth who have already engroſſed the attention of half mankind before you.

Of ſuch mighty importance does it appear to be, in the imaginations of men, to ſtand in that

ſituation which ſets them moſt in the view of general ſympathy and attention. And thus, place, that great object which divides the wives of aldermen, is the end of half the labours of human life; and is the cauſe of all the tumult and buſtle, all the rapine and injuſtice, which avarice and ambition have introduced into this world. People of ſenſe, it is ſaid, indeed deſpiſe place; that is, they deſpiſe ſitting at the head of the table, and are indifferent who it is that is pointed out to the company by that frivolous circumſtance, which the ſmalleſt advantange is capable of overbalancing. But rank, diſtinction, preheminence, no man deſpiſes, unleſs he is either raiſed very much above, or ſunk very much below, the ordinary ſtandard of human nature; unleſs he is either ſo confirmed in wiſdom and real philoſophy, as to be ſatisfied that, while the propriety of his conduct renders him the juſt object of approbation, it is of little conſequence though he be neither attended to, nor approved of; or ſo habituated to the idea of his own meanneſs, ſo ſunk in ſlothful and ſottiſh indifference, as entirely to have forgot the deſire, and almoſt the very wiſh for ſuperiority.

As to become the natural object of the joyous congratulations and ſympathetic attentions of mankind is, in this manner, the circumſtance which gives to proſperity all its dazzling ſplendour; ſo nothing darkens ſo much the gloom of adverſity as to feel that our misfortunes are the objects, not of the fellow-feeling, but of the contempt and averſion of our brethen. It is

upon

PART I.

upon this account that the moſt dreadful calamities are not always thoſe which it is moſt difficult to ſupport. It is often more mortifying to appear in public under ſmall diſaſters, than under great misfortunes. The firſt excite no ſympathy; but the ſecond, though they may excite none that approaches to the anguiſh of the ſufferer, call forth, however, a very lively compaſſion. The ſentiments of the ſpectators are, in this laſt caſe, leſs wide of thoſe of the ſufferer, and their imperfect fellow-feeling lends him ſome aſſiſtance in ſupporting his miſery. Before a gay aſſembly, a gentleman would be more mortified to appear covered with filth and rags than with blood and wounds. This laſt ſituation would intereſt their pity; the other would provoke their laughter. The judge who orders a criminal to be ſet in the pillory, diſhonours him more than if he had condemned him to the ſcaffold. The great prince, who, ſome years ago, caned a general officer at the head of his army, diſgraced him irrecoverably. The puniſhment would have been much leſs had he ſhot him through the body. By the laws of honour, to ſtrike with a cane diſhonours, to ſtrike with a ſword does not, for an obvious reaſon. Thoſe ſlighter puniſhments, when inflicted on a gentleman, to whom diſhonour is the greateſt of all evils, come to be regarded among a humane and generous people, as the moſt dreadful of any. With regard to perſons of that rank, therefore, they are univerſally laid aſide, and the law, while it takes their life upon many

many occasions, respects their honour upon almost all. To scourge a person of quality, or to set him in the pillory, upon account of any crime whatever, is a brutality of which no European government, except that of Russia, is capable.

A brave man is not rendered contemptible by being brought to the scaffold; he is, by being set in the pillory. His behaviour in the one situation may gain him universal esteem and admiration. No behaviour in the other can render him agreeable. The sympathy of the spectators supports him in the one case, and saves him from that shame, that consciousness that his misery is felt by himself only, which is of all sentiments the most unsupportable. There is no sympathy in the other; or, if there is any, it is not with his pain, which is a trifle, but with his consciousness of the want of sympathy with which this pain is attended. It is with his shame, not with his sorrow. Those who pity him, blush and hang down their heads for him. He droops in the same manner, and feels himself irrecoverably degraded by the punishment, though not by the crime. The man, on the contrary, who dies with resolution, as he is naturally regarded with the erect aspect of esteem and approbation, so he wears himself the same undaunted countenance; and, if the crime does not deprive him of the respect of others, the punishment never will. He has no suspicion that his situation is the object of contempt or derision to any body, and he can, with

PART I.

propriety, aſſume the air, not only of perfe ſerenity, but of triumph and exultation.

"Great dangers," ſays the Cardinal de Ret "have their charms, becauſe there is ſom "glory to be got, even when we miſcarr "But moderate dangers have nothing but wh "is horrible, becauſe the loſs of reputatio "always attends the want of ſucceſs." Hi maxim has the ſame foundation with what w have been juſt now obſerving with regard t puniſhments.

Human virtue is ſuperior to pain, to poverty to danger, and to death; nor does it even requir its utmoſt efforts to deſpiſe them. But to hav its miſery expoſed to inſult and deriſion, to b led in triumph, to be ſet up for the hand of ſcor to point at, is a ſituation in which its conſtanc is much more apt to fail. Compared with th contempt of mankind, all other external evil are eaſily ſupported.

CHAP. III.

Of the corruption of our moral ſentiments, whi is occaſioned by this diſpoſition to admire t rich and the great, and to deſpiſe or negle perſons of poor and mean condition.

THIS diſpoſition to admire, and almoſt worſhip, the rich and the powerful, a to deſpiſe, or, at leaſt, to neglect perſons po

poor and mean condition, though neceſſary both to eſtabliſh and to maintain the diſtinction of ranks and the order of ſociety, is, at the ſame time, the great and moſt univerſal cauſe of the corruption of our moral ſentiments. That wealth and greatneſs are often regarded with the reſpect and admiration which are due only to wiſdom and virtue; and that the contempt, of which vice and folly are the only proper objects, is often moſt unjuſtly beſtowed upon poverty and weakneſs, has been the complaint of moraliſts in all ages.

SECT. III.

We deſire both to be reſpectable and to be reſpected. We dread both to be contemptible and to be contemned. But, upon coming into the world, we ſoon find that wiſdom and virtue are by no means the ſole objects of reſpect; nor vice and folly, of contempt. We frequently ſee the reſpectful attentions of the world more ſtrongly directed towards the rich and the great, than towards the wiſe and the virtuous. We ſee frequently the vices and follies of the powerful much leſs deſpiſed than the poverty and weakneſs of the innocent. To deſerve, to acquire, and to enjoy the reſpect and admiration of mankind, are the great objects of ambition and emulation. Two different roads are preſented to us, equally leading to the attainment of this ſo much deſired object; the one, by the ſtudy of wiſdom and the practice of virtue; the other, by the acquiſition of wealth and greatneſs. Two different characters are preſented to our emulation; the one, of proud

PART I.

ambition and oſtentatious avidity; the othe of humble modeſty and equitable juſtice. Tw different models, two different pictures, are hel out to us, according to which we may faſhio our own character and behaviour; the on more gaudy and glittering in its colouring; th other more correct and more exquiſitely beau tiful in its outline: the one forcing itſelf upo the notice of every wandering eye; the other attracting the attention of ſcarce any body bu the moſt ſtudious and careful obſerver. The are the wiſe and the virtuous chiefly, a ſelect though, I am afraid, but a ſmall party, who ar the real and ſteady admirers of wiſdom an virtue. The great mob of mankind are th admirers and worſhippers, and, what may ſeem more extraordinary, moſt frequently the diſin tereſted admirers and worſhippers, of wealt and greatneſs.

The reſpect which we feel for wiſdom an virtue is, no doubt, different from that whic we conceive for wealth and greatneſs; and i requires no very nice diſcernment to diſtinguiſ the difference. But, notwithſtanding this di ference, thoſe ſentiments bear a very conſider able reſemblance to one another. In ſom particular features they are, no doubt, different but, in the general air of the countenance, the ſeem to be ſo very nearly the ſame, that inatten tive obſervers are very apt to miſtake the on for the other.

In equal degrees of merit there is ſcarce an man who does not reſpect more the rich an

the great, than the poor and the humble. With moſt men the preſumption and vanity of the former are much more admired, than the real and ſolid merit of the latter. It is ſcarce agreeable to good morals, or even to good language, perhaps, to ſay, that mere wealth and greatneſs, abſtracted from merit and virtue, deſerve our reſpect. We muſt acknowledge, however, that they almoſt conſtantly obtain it; and that they may, therefore, be conſidered as, in ſome reſpects, the natural objects of it. Thoſe exalted ſtations may, no doubt, be completely degraded by vice and folly. But, the vice and folly muſt be very great, before they can operate this complete degradation. The profligacy of a man of faſhion is looked upon with much leſs contempt and averſion, than that of a man of meaner condition. In the latter, a ſingle tranſgreſſion of the rules of temperance and propriety, is commonly more reſented, than the conſtant and avowed contempt of them ever is in the former.

In the middling and inferior ſtations of life, the road to virtue and that to fortune, to ſuch fortune, at leaſt, as men in ſuch ſtations can reaſonably expect to acquire, are, happily, in moſt caſes, very nearly the ſame. In all the middling and inferior profeſſions, real and ſolid profeſſional abilities, joined to prudent, juſt, firm, and temperate conduct, can very ſeldom fail of ſucceſs. Abilities will even ſometimes prevail where the conduct is by no means correct. Either habitual imprudence, however, or injuſtice, or weakneſs, or profligacy, will always

PART I.

cloud, and ſometimes depreſs altogether, moſt ſplendid profeſſional abilities. Men in inferior and middling ſtations of life, beſid can never be great enough to be above law, which muſt generally overawe them i ſome ſort of reſpect for, at leaſt, the more portant rules of juſtice. The ſucceſs of ſi people, too, almoſt always depends upon favour and good opinion of their neighbo and equals; and without a tolerably regu conduct theſe can very ſeldom be obtain The good old proverb, therefore, That hone is the beſt policy, holds, in ſuch ſituations, alm always perfectly true. In ſuch ſituations, the fore, we may generally expect a confidera degree of virtue; and, fortunately for the g morals of ſociety, theſe are the ſituations of far the greater part of mankind.

In the ſuperior ſtations of life the caſe unhappily not always the ſame. In the cou of princes, in the drawing-rooms of the gre where ſucceſs and preferment depend, not u the eſteem of intelligent and well-inform equals, but upon the fanciful and fooliſh fav of ignorant, preſumptuous, and proud ſuperio flattery and falſehood too often prevail o merit and abilities. In ſuch ſocieties the abili to pleaſe, are more regarded than the abili to ſerve. In quiet and peaceable times, wl the ſtorm is at a diſtance, the prince, or gr man, wiſhes only to be amuſed, and is even to fancy that he has ſcarce any occaſion for ſervice of any body, or that thoſe who am

l

him are ſufficiently able to ſerve him. The external graces, the frivolous accompliſhments of that impertinent and fooliſh thing called a man of faſhion, are commonly more admired than the ſolid and maſculine virtues of a warrior, a ſtateſman, a philoſopher, or a legiſlator. All the great and awful virtues, all the virtues which can fit, either for the council, the ſenate, or the field, are, by the inſolent and inſignificant flatterers, who commonly figure the moſt in ſuch corrupted ſocieties, held in the utmoſt contempt and deriſion. When the Duke of Sully was called upon by Lewis the Thirteenth, to give his advice in ſome great emergency, he obſerved the favourites and courtiers whiſpering to one another, and ſmiling at his unfaſhionable appearance. "Whenever Your Majeſty's father," ſaid the old warrior and ſtateſman, "did me the "honour to conſult me, he ordered the buffoons "of the court to retire into the antechamber."

It is from our diſpoſition to admire, and conſequently to imitate, the rich and the great, that they are enabled to ſet, or to lead what is called the faſhion. Their dreſs is the faſhionable dreſs; the language of their converſation, the faſhionable ſtyle; their air and deportment, the faſhionable behaviour. Even their vices and follies are faſhionable; and the greater part of men are proud to imitate and reſemble them in the very qualities which diſhonour and degrade them. Vain men often give themſelves airs of a faſhionable profligacy, which, in their hearts, they do not approve of, and of which, perhaps, they

PART I. are really not guilty. They desire to be praise for what they themselves do not think praise worthy, and are ashamed of unfashionable virtue which they sometimes practise in secret, and for which they have secretly some degree of real veneration. There are hypocrites of wealth and greatness, as well as of religion and virtue and a vain man is as apt to pretend to be what he is not, in the one way, as a cunning man is in the other. He assumes the equipage and splendid way of living of his superiors, without considering that whatever may be praise-worthy in any of these, derives its whole merit and propriety from its suitableness to that situation and fortune which both require and can easily support the expence. Many a poor man place his glory in being thought rich, without considering that the duties (if one may call such follies by so very venerable a name) which the reputation imposes upon him, must soon reduce him to beggary, and render his situation still more unlike that of those whom he admires and imitates, than it had been originally.

To attain to this envied situation, the candidates for fortune too frequently abandon the paths of virtue; for unhappily, the road which leads to the one, and that which leads to the other, lie sometimes in very opposite directions. But the ambitious man flatters himself that in the splendid situation to which he advances he will have so many means of commanding the respect and admiration of mankind, and will be enabled to act with such superior pro-

prie

priety and grace, that the luſtre of his future conduct will entirely cover, or efface, the foulneſs of the ſteps by which he arrived at that elevation. In many governments the candidates for the higheſt ſtations are above the law; and, if they can attain the object of their ambition, they have no fear of being called to account for the means by which they acquired it. They often endeavour, therefore, not only by fraud and falſehood, the ordinary and vulgar arts of intrigue and cabal; but ſometimes by the perpetration of the moſt enormous crimes, by murder and aſſaſſination, by rebellion and civil war, to ſupplant and deſtroy thoſe who oppoſe or ſtand in the way of their greatneſs. They more frequently miſcarry than ſucceed; and commonly gain nothing but the diſgraceful puniſhment which is due to their crimes. But, though they ſhould be ſo lucky as to attain that wiſhed-for greatneſs, they are always moſt miſerably diſappointed in the happineſs which they expect to enjoy in it. It is not eaſe or pleaſure, but always honour, of one kind or another, though frequently an honour very ill underſtood, that the ambitious man really purſues. But the honour of his exalted ſtation appears, both in his own eyes and in thoſe of other people, polluted and defiled by the baſeneſs of the means through which he roſe to it. Though by the profuſion of every liberal expence; though by exceſſive indulgence in every profligate pleaſure, the wretched, but uſual, reſource of ruined characters; though by the hurry of public

SECT. III.

ART I. public buſineſs, or by the prouder and more dazzling tumult of war, he may endeavour to efface, both from his own memory and from that of other people, the remembrance of what he has done; that remembrance never fails to purſue him. He invokes in vain the dark and diſmal powers of forgetfulneſs and oblivion. He remembers himſelf what he has done, and that remembrance tells him that other people muſt likewiſe remember it. Amidſt all the gaudy pomp of the moſt oſtentatious greatneſs; amidſt the venal and vile adulation of the great and of the learned; amidſt the more innocent, though more fooliſh, acclamations of the common people; amidſt all the pride of conqueſt and the triumph of ſucceſsful war, he is ſtill ſecretly purſued by the avenging furies of ſhame and remorſe; and, while glory ſeems to ſurround him on all ſides, he himſelf, in his own imagination, ſees black and foul infamy faſt purſuing him, and every moment ready to overtake him from behind. Even the great Cæſar, though he had the magnanimity to diſmiſs his guards, could not diſmiſs his ſuſpicions. The remembrance of Pharſalia ſtill haunted and purſued him. When, at the requeſt of the ſenate, he had the generoſity to pardon Marcellus, he told that aſſembly, that he was not unaware of the deſigns which were carrying on againſt his life; but that, as he had lived long enough both for nature and for glory, he was contented to die, and therefore deſpiſed all conſpiracies. He had, perhaps, lived long enough for nature.

the man who felt himſelf the object of ſuch ly reſentment, from thoſe whoſe favour he d to gain, and whom he ſtill wiſhed to der as his friends, had certainly lived too for real glory; or for all the happineſs h he could ever hope to enjoy in the love eſteem of his equals.

SECT. III.

THE

THE

THEORY

OF

MORAL SENTIMENTS

PART II.

Of MERIT and DEMERIT; or, of the O
jects of REWARD and PUNISHMENT.

Consisting of Three Sections.

SECTION I.

OF THE SENSE OF MERIT AND DEMERIT.

INTRODUCTION.

PART II.

THERE is another set of qualities ascri
to the actions and conduct of manki
distinct from their propriety or impropri
their decency or ungracefulness, and which
the objects of a distinct species of approba
and disapprobation. These are Merit and
merit, the qualities of deserving reward, an
deserving punishment.

SECT. I.

It has already been obſerved, that the ſentiment or affection of the heart, from which any action proceeds, and upon which its whole virtue or vice depends, may be conſidered under two different aſpects, or in two different relations: firſt, in relation to the cauſe or object which excites it; and, ſecondly, in relation to the end which it propoſes, or to the effect which it tends to produce: that upon the ſuitableneſs or unſuitableneſs, upon the proportion or diſproportion, which the affection ſeems to bear to the cauſe or object which excites it, depends the propriety or impropriety, the decency or ungracefulneſs of the conſequent action; and that upon the beneficial or hurtful effects which the affection propoſes or tends to produce, depends the merit or demerit, the good or ill deſert of the action to which it gives occaſion. Wherein conſiſts our ſenſe of the propriety or impropriety of actions, has been explained in the former part of this diſcourſe. We come now to conſider, wherein conſiſts that of their good or ill deſert.

CHAP.

T

CHAP. I.

That whatever appears to be the proper object of gratitude, appears to deſerve reward; and that, in the ſame manner, whatever appears to be the proper object of reſentment, appears to deſerve puniſhment.

TO us, therefore, that action muſt appear to deſerve reward, which appears to be the proper and approved object of that ſentiment, which moſt immediately and directly prompts us to reward, or to do good to another. And in the ſame manner, that action muſt appear to deſerve puniſhment, which appears to be the proper and approved object of that ſentiment which moſt immediately and directly prompts us to puniſh, or to inflict evil upon another.

The ſentiment which moſt immediately and directly prompts us to reward, is gratitude; that which moſt immediately and directly prompts us to puniſh, is reſentment.

To us, therefore, that action muſt appear to deſerve reward, which appears to be the proper and approved object of gratitude; as, on the other hand, that action muſt appear to deſerve puniſhment, which appears to be the proper and approved object of reſentment.

To reward, is to recompenſe, to remunerate, to return good for good received. To puniſh,

too.

too, is to recompenſe, to remunerate, though in a different manner; it is to return evil for evil that has been done. SECT. I.

There are ſome other paſſions, beſides gratitude and reſentment, which intereſt us in the happineſs or miſery of others; but there are none which ſo directly excite us to be the inſtruments of either. The love and eſteem which grow upon acquaintance and habitual approbation, neceſſarily lead us to be pleaſed with the good fortune of the man who is the object of ſuch agreeable emotions, and conſequently to be willing to lend a hand to promote it. Our love, however, is fully ſatisfied, though his good fortune ſhould be brought about without our aſſiſtance. All that this paſſion deſires is to ſee him happy, without regarding who was the author of his proſperity. But gratitude is not to be ſatisfied in this manner. If the perſon to whom we owe many obligations, is made happy without our aſſiſtance, though it pleaſes our love, it does not content our gratitude. Till we have recompenſed him, till we ourſelves have been inſtrumental in promoting his happineſs, we feel ourſelves ſtill loaded with that debt which his paſt ſervices have laid upon us.

The hatred and diſlike, in the ſame manner, which grow upon the habitual diſapprobation, would often lead us to take a malicious pleaſure in the misfortune of the man whoſe conduct and character excite ſo painful a paſſion. But though diſlike and hatred harden us againſt all ſympathy, and ſometimes diſpoſe us even to rejoice

PART II.

rejoice at the diſtreſs of another, yet, if there is no reſentment in the caſe, if neither we nor our friends have received any great perſonal provocation, theſe paſſions would not naturally lead us to wiſh to be inſtrumental in bringing it about. Though we could fear no puniſhment in conſequence of our having had ſome hand in it, we would rather that it ſhould happen by other means. To one under the dominion of violent hatred it would be agreeable, perhaps, to hear, that the perſon whom he abhorred and deteſted was killed by ſome accident. But if he had the leaſt ſpark of juſtice, which, though this paſſion is not very favourable to virtue, he might ſtill have, it would hurt him exceſſively to have been himſelf, even without deſign, the occaſion of this misfortune. Much more would the very thought of voluntarily contributing to it ſhock him beyond all meaſure. He would reject with horror even the imagination of ſo execrable a deſign; and if he could imagine himſelf capable of ſuch an enormity, he would begin to regard to himſelf in the ſame odious light in which he had conſidered the perſon who was the object of his diſlike. But it is quite otherwiſe with reſentment: if the perſon who had done us ſome great injury, who had murdered our father or our brother, for example, ſhould ſoon afterwards die of a fever, or even be brought to the ſcaffold upon account of ſome other crime, though it might ſooth our hatred, it would not fully gratify our reſentment. Reſentment would prompt us to deſire, not only that he ſhould be

puniſhed,

unifhed, but that he fhould be punifhed by our means, and upon account of that particular injury which he had done to us. Refentment cannot be fully gratified, unlefs the offender is not only made to grieve in his turn, but to grieve for that particular wrong which we have fuffered from him. He muft be made to repent and be forry for this very action, that others, through fear of the like punifhment, may be terrified from being guilty of the like offence. The natural gratification of this paffion tends, of its own accord, to produce all the political ends of punifhment; the correction of the criminal, and example to the public.

Gratitude and refentment, therefore, are the fentiments which moft immediately and directly prompt to reward and to punifh. To us, therefore, he muft appear to deferve reward, who appears to be the proper and approved object of gratitude; and he to deferve punifhment, who appears to be that of refentment.

CHAP. II.

Of the proper objects of gratitude and refentment.

TO be the proper and approved object either of gratitude or refentment, can mean nothing but to be the object of that gratitude,

 and

PART II. and of that resentment, which naturally seems proper, and is approved of.

But these, as well as all the other passions of human nature, seem proper and are approved of, when the heart of every impartial spectator entirely sympathizes with them, when every indifferent by-stander entirely enters into, and goes along with them.

He, therefore, appears to deserve reward, who, to some person or persons, is the natural object of a gratitude which every human heart is disposed to beat time to, and thereby applaud: and he, on the other hand, appears to deserve punishment, who in the same manner is to some person or persons the natural object of a resentment which the breast of every reasonable man is ready to adopt and sympathize with. To us, surely, that action must appear to deserve reward, which every body who knows of it would wish to reward, and therefore delights to see rewarded: and that action must as surely appear to deserve punishment, which every body who hears of it is angry with, and upon that account rejoices to see punished.

1. As we sympatize with the joy of our companions, when in prosperity, so we join with them in the complacency and satisfaction with which they naturally regard whatever is the cause of their good fortune. We enter into the love and affection which they conceive for it, and begin to love it too. We should be sorry for their sakes if it was destroyed, or even if it was placed

placed at too great a diſtance from them, and out of the reach of their care and protection, though they ſhould loſe nothing by its abſence except the pleaſure of ſeeing it. If it is man who has thus been the fortunate inſtrument of the happineſs of his brethren, this is ſtill more peculiarly the caſe. When we ſee one man aſſiſted, protected, relieved by another, our ſympathy with the joy of the perſon who receives the benefit ſerves only to animate our fellow-feeling with his gratitude towards him who beſtows it. When we look upon the perſon who is the cauſe of his pleaſure with the eyes with which we imagine he muſt look upon him, his benefactor ſeems to ſtand before us in the moſt engaging and amiable light. We readily therefore ſympathize with the grateful affection which he conceives for a perſon to whom he has been ſo much obliged; and conſequently applaud the returns which he is diſpoſed to make for the good offices conferred upon him. As we entirely enter into the affection from which theſe returns proceed, they neceſſarily ſeem every way proper and ſuitable to their object.

SECT. I.

2. In the ſame manner, as we ſympathize with the ſorrow of our fellow-creature whenever we ſee his diſtreſs, ſo we likewiſe enter into his abhorrence and averſion for whatever has given occaſion to it. Our heart, as it adopts and beats time to his grief, ſo is it likewiſe animated with that ſpirit by which he endeavours to drive away or deſtroy the cauſe of it. The indolent and paſſive fellow-feeling, by which we accompany him

PART II. in his ſufferings, readily gives way to that more vigorous and active ſentiment by which we go along with him in the effort he makes, either to repel them, or to gratify his averſion to what has given occaſion to them. This is ſtill more peculiarly the caſe, when it is man who has cauſed them. When we ſee one man oppreſſed or injured by another, the ſympathy which we feel with the diſtreſs of the ſufferer ſeems to ſerve only to animate our fellow-feeling with his reſentment againſt the offender. We are rejoiced to ſee him attack his adverſary in his turn, and are eager and ready to aſſiſt him whenever he exerts himſelf for defence, or even for vengeance within a certain degree. If the injured ſhould periſh in the quarrel, we not only ſympathize with the real reſentment of his friends and relations, but with the imaginary reſentment which in fancy we lend to the dead, who is no longer capable of feeling that or any other human ſentiment. But as we put ourſelves in his ſituation, as we enter, as it were, into his body, and in our imaginations, in ſome meaſure, animate anew the deformed and mangled carcaſs of the ſlain, when we bring home in this manner his caſe to our own boſoms, we feel upon this, as upon many other occaſions, an emotion which the perſon principally concerned is incapable of feeling, and which yet we feel by an illuſive ſympathy with him. The ſympathetic tears which we ſhed for that immenſe and irretrievable loſs, which in our fancy he appears to have ſuſtained, ſeem to be but a ſmall part of the duty which

we him. The injury which he has ſuffered SECT. I.
ınds, we think, a principal part of our
ıtion. We feel that reſentment which
magine he ought to feel, and which he
d feel, if in his cold and lifeleſs body there
ined any conſciouſneſs of what paſſes upon
ı. His blood, we think, calls aloud for
eance. The very aſhes of the dead ſeem
: diſturbed at the thought that his injuries
o paſs unrevenged. The horrors which are
oſed to haunt the bed of the murderer, the
ts which ſuperſtition imagines riſe from
· graves to demand vengeance upon thoſe
brought them to an untimely end, all take
· origin from this natural ſympathy with the
ginary reſentment of the ſlain. And with
rd, at leaſt, to this moſt dreadful of all
es, Nature, antecedent to all reflection
ı the utility of puniſhment, has in this
ner ſtamped upon the human heart, in the
ıgeſt and moſt indelible characters, an im-
iate and inſtinctive approbation of the
ed and neceſſary law of retaliation.

CHAP. III.

That where there is no approbation of the conduct of the person who confers the benefit, there is little sympathy with the gratitude of him who receives it: and that, on the contrary, where there is no disapprobation of the motives of the person who does the mischief, there is no sort of sympathy with the resentment of him who suffers it.

IT is to be observed, however, that, how beneficial soever on the one hand, or how hurtful soever on the other, the actions or intentions of the person who acts may have been to the person who is, if I may say so, acted upon, yet if in the one case there appears to have been no propriety in the motives of the agent, if we cannot enter into the affections which influenced his conduct, we have little sympathy with the gratitude of the person who receives the benefit: or if, in the other case, there appears to have been no impropriety in the motives of the agent, if, on the contrary, the affections which influenced his conduct are such as we must necessarily enter into, we can have no sort of sympathy with the resentment of the person who suffers. Little gratitude seems due in the one case, and all sort of resentment seems unjust in the other. The one action seems to merit little reward, the other to deserve no punishment.

SECT. I.

1. Firſt, I ſay, that wherever we cannot ſympathize with the affections of the agent, wherever there ſeems to be no propriety in the motives which influenced his conduct, we are leſs diſpoſed to enter into the gratitude of the perſon who received the benefit of his actions. A very ſmall return ſeems due to that fooliſh and profuſe generoſity which confers the greateſt benefits from the moſt trivial motives, and gives an eſtate to a man merely becauſe his name and ſurname happen to be the ſame with thoſe of the giver. Such ſervices do not ſeem to demand any proportionable recompence. Our contempt for the folly of the agent hinders us from thoroughly entering into the gratitude of the perſon to whom the good office has been done. His benefactor ſeems unworthy of it. As when we place ourſelves in the ſituation of the perſon obliged, we feel that we could conceive no great reverence for ſuch a benefactor, we eaſily abſolve him from a great deal of that ſubmiſſive veneration and eſteem which we ſhould think due to a more reſpectable character; and provided he always treats his weak friend with kindneſs and humanity, we are willing to excuſe him from many attentions and regards which we ſhould demand to a worthier patron. Thoſe Princes who have heaped, with the greateſt profuſion, wealth, power and honours, upon their favourites, have ſeldom excited that degree of attachment to their perſons which has often been experienced by thoſe who were more frugal of their favours. The well-natured, but in-

PART II. judicious prodigality of James the Firſt of Great Britain ſeems to have attached nobody to his perſon; and that Prince, notwithſtanding his ſocial and harmleſs diſpoſition, appears to have lived and died without a friend. The whole gentry and nobility of England expoſed their lives and fortunes in the cauſe of his more frugal and diſtinguiſhing ſon, notwithſtanding the coldneſs and diſtant ſeverity of his ordinary deportment.

2. Secondly, I ſay, That wherever the conduct of the agent appears to have been entirely directed by motives and affections which we thoroughly enter into and approve of, we can have no ſort of ſympathy with the reſentment of the ſufferer, how great ſoever the miſchief which may have been done to him. When two people quarrel, if we take part with, and entirely adopt the reſentment of one of them, it is impoſſible that we ſhould enter into that of the other. Our ſympathy with the perſon whoſe motives we go along with, and whom therefore we look upon as in the right, cannot but harden us againſt all fellow-feeling with the other, whom we neceſſarily regard as in the wrong. Whatever this laſt, therefore, may have ſuffered, while it is no more than what we ourſelves ſhould have wiſhed him to ſuffer, while it is no more than what our own ſympathetic indignation would have prompted us to inflict upon him, it cannot either diſpleaſe or provoke us. When an inhuman murderer is brought to the ſcaffold, though we have ſome compaſſion for his miſery, we can have no ſort

of fellow-feeling with his reſentment, if he ſhould be ſo abſurd as to expreſs any againſt either his proſecutor or his judge. The natural tendency of their juſt indignation againſt ſo vile a criminal is indeed the moſt fatal and ruinous to him. But it is impoſſible that we ſhould be diſpleaſed with the tendency of a ſentiment, which, when we bring the caſe home to ourſelves, we feel that we cannot avoid adopting.

CHAP. IV.

Recapitulation of the foregoing chapters.

1. WE do not therefore thoroughly and heartily ſympathize with the gratitude of one man towards another, merely becauſe this other has been the cauſe of his good fortune, unleſs he has been the cauſe of it from motives which we entirely go along with. Our heart muſt adopt the principles of the agent, and go along with all the affections which influenced his conduct, before it can entirely ſympathize with and beat time to, the gratitude of the perſon who has been benefited by his actions. If in the conduct of the benefactor there appears to have been no propriety, how beneficial ſoever its effects, it does not ſeem to demand, or neceſſarily to require, any proportionable recompenſe.

But when to the beneficent tendency of the action is joined the propriety of the affection from

PART II. from which it proceeds, when we entirely ſympathize and go along with the motives of the agent, the love which we conceive for him upon his own account, enhances, and enlivens our fellow-feeling with the gratitude of thoſe who owe their proſperity to his good conduct. His actions ſeem then to demand, and, if I may ſay ſo, to call aloud for a proportionable recompenſe. We then entirely enter into that gratitude which prompts to beſtow it. The benefactor ſeems then to be the proper object of reward, when we thus entirely ſympathize with, and approve of, that ſentiment which prompts to reward him. When we approve of, and go along with, the affection from which the action proceeds, we muſt neceſſarily approve of the action, and regard the perſon towards whom it is directed, as its proper and ſuitable object.

2. In the ſame manner, we cannot at all ſympathize with the reſentment of one man againſt another, merely becauſe this other has been the cauſe of his misfortune, unleſs he has been the cauſe of it from motives which we cannot enter into. Before we can adopt the reſentment of the ſufferer, we muſt diſapprove of the motives of the agent, and feel that our heart renounces all ſympathy with the affections which influenced his conduct. If there appears to have been no impropriety in theſe, how fatal ſoever the tendency of the action which proceeds from them to thoſe againſt whom it is directed, it does not

eem to deſerve any puniſhment, or to be the proper object of any reſentment.

But when to the hurtfulneſs of the action is oined the impropriety of the affection from whence it proceeds, when our heart rejects with abhorrence all fellow-feeling with the motives of the agent, we then heartily and entirely ympathize with the reſentment of the ſufferer. Such actions ſeem then to deſerve, and, if I may ſay ſo, to call aloud for, a proportionable puniſhment; and we entirely enter into, and thereby approve of, that reſentment which prompts to inflict it. The offender neceſſarily ſeems then to be the proper object of puniſhment, when we thus entirely ſympathize with, and thereby approve of, that ſentiment which prompts to puniſh. In this caſe too, when we approve, and go along with, the affection from which the action proceeds, we muſt neceſſarily approve of the action, and regard the perſon againſt whom it is directed, as its proper and ſuitable object.

CHAP. V.

The analyſis of the ſenſe of Merit and Demerit.

1. AS our ſenſe, therefore, of the propriety of conduct ariſes from what I ſhall call a direct ſympathy with the affections and motives of

PART II. of the perſon who acts, ſo our ſenſe of its merit ariſes from what I ſhall call an indirect ſympathy with the gratitude of the perſon who is, if I may ſay ſo, acted upon.

As we cannot indeed enter thoroughly into the gratitude of the perſon who receives the benefit, unleſs we beforehand approve of the motives of the benefactor, ſo, upon this account, the ſenſe of merit ſeems to be a compounded ſentiment, and to be made up of two diſtinct emotions; a direct ſympathy with the ſentiments of the agent, and an indirect ſympathy with the gratitude of thoſe who receive the benefit of his actions.

We may, upon many different occaſions, plainly diſtinguiſh thoſe two different emotions combining and uniting together in our ſenſe of the good deſert of a particular character or action. When we read in hiſtory concerning actions of proper and beneficent greatneſs of mind, how eagerly do we enter into ſuch deſigns? How much are we animated by that high-ſpirited generoſity which directs them? How keen are we for their ſucceſs? How grieved at their diſappointment? In imagination we become the very perſon whoſe actions are repreſented to us: we tranſport ourſelves in fancy to the ſcenes of thoſe diſtant and forgotten adventures, and imagine ourſelves acting the part of a Scipio or a Camillus, a Timoleon or an Ariſtides. So far our ſentiments are founded upon the direct ſympathy with the perſon who acts. Nor is the indirect ſympathy with thoſe who receive

ie benefit of ſuch actions leſs ſenſibly felt. Whenever we place ourſelves in the ſituation of theſe laſt, with what warm and affectionate fellow-feeling do we enter into their gratitude towards thoſe who ſerved them ſo eſſentially? We embrace, as it were, their benefactor along with them. Our heart readily ſympathizes with the higheſt tranſports of their grateful affection. No honours, no rewards, we think, can be too great for them to beſtow upon him. When they make this proper return for his ſervices, we heartily applaud and go along with them; but are ſhocked beyond all meaſure, if by their conduct they appear to have little ſenſe of the obligations conferred upon them. Our whole ſenſe, in ſhort, of the merit and good deſert of ſuch actions, of the propriety and fitneſs of recompenſing them, and making the perſon who performed them rejoice in his turn, ariſes from the ſympathetic emotions of gratitude and love, with which, when we bring home to our own breaſt the ſituation of thoſe principally concerned, we feel ourſelves naturally tranſported towards the man who could act with ſuch proper and noble beneficence.

2. In the ſame manner as our ſenſe of the impropriety of conduct ariſes from a want of ſympathy, or from a direct antipathy to the affections and motives of the agent, ſo our ſenſe of its demerit ariſes from what I ſhall here too call an indirect ſympathy with the reſentment of the ſufferer.

As

PART II.

As we cannot indeed enter into the resentment of the sufferer, unless our heart beforehand disapproves the motives of the agent, and renounces all fellow-feeling with them; so upon this account the sense of demerit, as well as that of merit, seems to be a compounded sentiment, and to be made up of two distinct emotions; a direct antipathy to the sentiments of the agent, and an indirect sympathy with the resentment of the sufferer.

We may here too, upon many different occasions, plainly distinguish those two different emotions combining and uniting together in our sense of the ill desert of a particular character or action. When we read in history concerning the perfidy and cruelty of a Borgia or a Nero, our heart rises up against the detestable sentiments which influenced their conduct, and renounces with horror and abomination all fellow-feeling with such execrable motives. So far our sentiments are founded upon the direct antipathy to the affections of the agent: and the indirect sympathy with the resentment of the sufferers is still more sensibly felt. When we bring home to ourselves the situation of the persons whom those scourges of mankind insulted, murdered, or betrayed, what indignation do we not feel against such insolent and inhuman oppressors of the earth? Our sympathy with the unavoidable distress of the innocent sufferers is not more real nor more lively, than our fellow-feeling with their just and natural resentment.

The former ſentiment only heightens the latter, and the idea of their diſtreſs ſerves only to inflame and blow up our animoſity againſt thoſe who occaſioned it. When we think of the anguiſh of the ſufferers, we take part with them more earneſtly againſt their oppreſſors; we enter with more eagerneſs into all their ſchemes of vengeance, and feel ourſelves every moment wreaking, in imagination, upon ſuch violators of the laws of ſociety, that puniſhment which our ſympathetic indignation tells us is due to their crimes. Our ſenſe of the horror and dreadful atrocity of ſuch conduct, the delight which we take in hearing that it was properly puniſhed, the indignation which we feel when it eſcapes this due retaliation, our whole ſenſe and feeling, in ſhort, of its ill deſert, of the propriety and fitneſs of inflicting evil upon the perſon who is guilty of it, and of making him grieve in his turn, ariſes from the ſympathetic indignation which naturally boils up in the breaſt of the ſpectator, whenever he thoroughly brings home to himſelf the caſe of the ſufferer *.

* To aſcribe in this manner our natural ſenſe of the ill deſert of human actions to a ſympathy with the reſentment of the ſufferer, may ſeem, to the greater part of the people, to be a degradation of that ſentiment. Reſentment is commonly regarded as ſo odious a paſſion, that they will be apt to think it impoſſible that ſo laudable a principle, as the ſenſe of the ill deſert of vice, ſhould in any reſpect be founded upon it. They will be more willing, perhaps, to admit that our ſenſe of the merit of good actions is founded upon a ſympathy with the gratitude of the perſons who receive the benefit of them; becauſe gratitude, as well as all the other benevolent paſſions, is regarded as an amiable principle, which can take nothing from the worth of whatever is founded upon it. Gratitude and reſentment, however, are in every reſpect, it is evident, counterparts to one another; and if our ſenſe

ſenſe of merit ariſes from a ſympathy with the one, our ſenſe of demerit can ſcarce miſs to proceed from a fellow-feeling with the other.

Let it be conſidered too that reſentment, though, in the degrees in which we too often ſee it, the moſt odious, perhaps, of all the paſſions, is not diſapproved of when properly humbled and entirely brought down to the level of the ſympathetic indignation of the ſpectator. When we, who are the byſtanders, feel that our own animoſity entirely correſponds with that of the ſufferer, when the reſentment of this laſt does not in any reſpect go beyond our own, when no word, no geſture, eſcapes him that denotes an emotion more violent than what we can keep time to, and when he never aims at inflicting any puniſhment beyond what we ſhould rejoice to ſee inflicted, or what we ourſelves would upon this account even deſire to be the inſtruments of inflicting, it is impoſſible that we ſhould not entirely approve of his ſentiments. Our own emotion in this caſe muſt, in our eyes, undoubtedly juſtify his. And as experiences teaches us how much the greater part of mankind are incapable of this moderation, and how great an effort muſt be made in order to bring down the rude and undiſciplined impulſe of reſentment to this ſuitable temper, we cannot avoid conceiving a conſiderable degree of eſteem and admiration for one who appears capable of exerting ſo much ſelf-command over one of the moſt ungovernable paſſions of his nature. When indeed the animoſity of the ſufferer exceeds, as it almoſt always does, what we can go along with, as we cannot enter into it, we neceſſarily diſapprove of it. We even diſapprove of it more than we ſhould of an equal exceſs of almoſt any other paſſion derived from the imagination. And this too violent reſentment, inſtead of carrying us along with it becomes itſelf the object of our reſentment and indignation. We enter into the oppoſite reſentment of the perſon who is the object of this unjuſt emotion, and who is in danger of ſuffering from it. Revenge, therefore, the exceſs of reſentment, appears to be the moſt deteſtable of all the paſſions, and is the object of the horror and indignation of every body. And as in the way in which this paſſion commonly diſcovers itſelf among mankind, it is exceſſive a hundred times for once that it is immoderate, we are very apt to conſider it as altogether odious and deteſtable, becauſe in its moſt ordinary appearances it is ſo. Nature, however, even in the preſent depraved ſtate of mankind, does not ſeem to have dealt ſo unkindly with us, as to have endowed us with any principle which is wholly and in every reſpect evil, or which, in no degree and in no direction, can be the proper object of praiſe and approbation. Upon ſome occaſions we are ſenſible that this paſſion, which is generally too ſtrong, may likewiſe be too weak. We ſometimes complain that a particular perſon ſhows too little ſpirit, and has too little ſenſe of the injuries that have been done to him; and we are as ready to deſpiſe him for the defect, as to hate him for the exceſs of this paſſion.

The inſpired writers would not ſurely have talked ſo frequently or ſo ſtrongly of the wrath and anger of God, if they had regarded every degree

degree of those [illegible] as vicious and evil, even in so weak and imperfect a creature as man.

SECT. I.

Let it be considered too, that the present inquiry is not concerning a matter of right, if I may say so, but concerning a matter of fact. We are not at present examining [illegible] what principles a perfect being would approve of the punishment [illegible] or bad actions; but upon what principles so weak and imperfect a creature as man actually and in fact approves of it. The principles which I have just now mentioned, it is evident, have a very great effect upon his sentiments; and it seems wisely ordered that it should be so. The very existence of society requires that unmerited and unprovoked malice should be restrained by proper punishments; and consequently, that to inflict those punishments should be re[illegible]rded as a proper and laudable action. Though man, therefore, be naturally endowed with a desire of the welfare and preservation of society, yet the Author of nature has not entrusted it to his reason to find out that a certain application of punishments is the proper means of attaining this end; but has endowed him with an immediate and instinctive approbation of that very application which is most proper to attain it. The œconomy of nature is in this respect exact[illegible] of a piece with what it is upon many other occasions. With reg[illegible] to all those ends which, upon account of their peculiar importa[illegible]y be regarded, if such an expression is allowable, as the favourite ends of nature, she has constantly in this manner not only endowed mankind with an appetite for the end which she proposes, but likewise with an appetite for the means by which alone this end can be brought about, for their own sakes, and independent of their tendency to produce it. Thus self-preservation, and the propagation of the species, are the great ends which Nature seems to have proposed in the formation of all animals. Mankind are endowed with a desire of those ends, and an aversion to the contrary; with a love of life, and a dread of dissolution; with a desire of the continuance and perpetuity of the species, and with an aversion to the thoughts of its intire extinction. But though we are in this manner endowed with a very strong [illegible]e of those ends, it has not been intrusted to the slow and un[illegible]in[illegible] of our reason, to find out the proper means of on[illegible] about. Nature has directed us to the greater part of these by original and immediate instincts. Hunger, thirst, the passion which unites the two sexes, the love of pleasure, and the dread of pain, prompt us to apply those means for their own sakes, and without any consideration of their tendency to those beneficent ends which the great Director of nature intended to produce by them.

Before I conclude this note, I must take notice of a difference between the approbation of propriety and that of merit or beneficence. Before we approve of the sentiments of any person as proper and suitable to their objects, we must not only be affected in the same manner as he is, but we must perceive this harmony and correspondence of sentiments between him and ourselves. Thus,

 though

PART II.

though upon hearing of a misfortune that had befallen my friend, I ſhould conceive preciſely that degree of concern which he gives way to; yet till I am informed of the manner in which he behaves, till I perceive the harmony between his emotions and mine, I cannot be ſaid to approve of the ſentiments which influence his behaviour. The approbation of propriety therefore requires, not only that we ſhould entirely ſympathize with the perſon who acts, but that we ſhould perceive this perfect concord between his ſentiments and our own. On the contrary, when I hear of a benefit that has been beſtowed upon another perſon, let him who has received it be affected in what manner he pleaſes, if, by bringing his caſe home to myſelf, I feel gratitude ariſe in my own breaſt, I neceſſarily approve of the conduct of his benefactor, and regard it as meritorious, and the proper object of reward. Whether the perſon who has received the benefit conceives gratitude or not, cannot, it is evident, in any degree alter our ſentiments with regard to the merit of him who has beſtowed it. No actual correſpondence of ſentiments, therefore, is here required. It is ſufficient that if he was grateful, they would correſpond; and our ſenſe of merit is often founded upon one of thoſe illuſive ſympathies, by which, when we bring home to ourſelves the caſe of another, we are often affected in a manner in which the perſon principally concerned is incapable of being affected. There is a ſimilar difference between our diſapprobation of demerit, and that of impropriety.

SECTION II.

OF JUSTICE AND BENEFICENCE.

CHAP. I.

Comparison of those two virtues.

SECT. II.

ACTIONS of a beneficent tendency, which proceed from proper motives, seem alone to require reward; because such alone are the approved objects of gratitude, or excite the sympathetic gratitude of the spectator.

Actions of a hurtful tendency, which proceed from improper motives, seem alone to deserve punishment; because such alone are the approved objects of resentment, or excite the sympathetic resentment of the spectator.

Beneficence is always free, it cannot be extorted by force, the mere want of it exposes to no punishment; because the mere want of beneficence tends to do no real positive evil. It may disappoint of the good which might reasonably have been expected, and upon that account it may justly excite dislike and disapprobation: it cannot, however, provoke any resentment which mankind will go along with. The man who does not recompense his benefactor, when he has it in his power, and when his benefactor needs his assistance, is, no doubt, guilty of the blackest ingratitude. The heart of every impartial spectator rejects all fellow-feeling with

PART II. the ſelfiſhneſs of his motives, and he is the proper object of the higheſt diſapprobation. But ſtill he does no poſitive hurt to any body. He only does not do that good which in propriety he ought to have done. He is the object of hatred, a paſſion which is naturally excited by impropriety of ſentiment and behaviour; not of reſentment, a paſſion which is never properly called forth but by actions which tend to do real and poſitive hurt to ſome particular perſons. His want of gratitude, therefore, cannot be puniſhed. To oblige him by force to perform, what in gratitude he ought to perform, and what every impartial ſpectator would approve of him for performing, would, if poſſible, be ſtill more improper than his neglecting to perform it. His benefactor would diſhonour himſelf if he attempted by violence to conſtrain him to gratitude, and it would be impertinent for any third perſon, who was not the ſuperior of either, to intermeddle. But of all the duties of beneficence, thoſe which gratitude recommends to us approach neareſt to what is called a perfect and complete obligation. What friendſhip, what generoſity, what charity, would prompt us to do with univerſal approbation, is ſtill more free, and can ſtill leſs be extorted by force than the duties of gratitude. We talk of the debt of gratitude, not of charity, or generoſity, nor even of friendſhip, when friendſhip is mere eſteem, and has not been enhanced and complicated with gratitude for good offices.

Reſent-

Resentment seems to have been given us by nature for defence, and for defence only. It is the safeguard of justice and the security of innocence. It prompts us to beat off the mischief which is attempted to be done to us, and to retaliate that which is already done; that the offender may be made to repent of his injustice, and that others, through fear of the like punishment, may be terrified from being guilty of the like offence. It must be reserved therefore for these purposes, nor can the spectator ever go along with it when it is exerted for any other. But the mere want of the beneficent virtues, though it may disappoint us of the good which might reasonably be expected, neither does, nor attempts to do, any mischief from which we can have occasion to defend ourselves.

There is however another virtue, of which the observance is not left to the freedom of our own wills, which may be extorted by force, and of which the violation exposes to resentment, and consequently to punishment. This virtue is justice: the violation of justice is injury: it does real and positive hurt to some particular persons, from motives which are naturally disapproved of. It is, therefore, the proper object of resentment, and of punishment, which is the natural consequence of resentment. As mankind go along with, and approve of the violence employed to avenge the hurt which is done by injustice, so they much more go along with, and approve of, that which is employed to prevent and beat off the injury, and to restrain the

PART II. offender from hurting his neighbours. The perſon himſelf who meditates an injuſtice is ſenſible of this, and feels that force may, with the utmoſt propriety, be made uſe of, both by the perſon whom he is about to injure, and by others, either to obſtruct the execution of his crime, or to puniſh him when he has executed it. And upon this is founded that remarkable diſtinction between juſtice and all the other ſocial virtues, which has of late been particularly inſiſted upon by an author of very great and original genius, that we feel ourſelves to be under a ſtricter obligation to act according to juſtice, than agreeably to friendſhip, charity, or generoſity; that the practice of theſe laſt mentioned virtues ſeems to be left in ſome meaſure to our own choice, but that, ſomehow or other, we feel ourſelves to be in a peculiar manner tied, bound, and obliged to the obſervation of juſtice. We feel, that is to ſay, that force may, with the utmoſt propriety, and with the approbation of all mankind, be made uſe of to conſtrain us to obſerve the rules of the one, but not to follow the precepts of the other.

We muſt always, however, carefully diſtinguiſh what is only blamable, or the proper object of diſapprobation, from what force may be employed either to puniſh or to prevent. That ſeems blamable which falls ſhort of that ordinary degree of proper beneficence which experience teaches us to expect of every body; and on the contrary, that ſeems praiſe-worthy which goes beyond it. The ordinary degree itſelf

itſelf ſeems neither blamable nor praiſe-worthy. A father, a ſon, a brother, who behaves to the correſpondent relation neither better nor worſe than the greater part of men commonly do, ſeems properly to deſerve neither praiſe nor blame. He who ſurpriſes us by extraordinary and unexpected, though ſtill proper and ſuitable kindneſs, or on the contrary by extraordinary and unexpected, as well as unſuitable unkindneſs, ſeems praiſe-worthy in the one caſe, and blamable in the other.

SECT. II.

Even the moſt ordinary degree of kindneſs or beneficence, however, cannot among equals, be extorted by force. Among equals each individual is naturally, and antecedent to the inſtitution of civil government, regarded as having a right both to defend himſelf from injuries, and to exact a certain degree of puniſhment for thoſe which have been done to him. Every generous ſpectator not only approves of his conduct when he does this, but enters ſo far into his ſentiments as often to be willing to aſſiſt him. When one man attacks, or robs, or attempts to murder another, all the neighbours take the alarm, and think that they do right when they run, either to revenge the perſon who has been injured, or to defend him who is in danger of being ſo. But when a father fails in the ordinary degree of parental affection towards a ſon; when a ſon ſeems to want that filial reverence which might be expected to his father; when brothers are without the uſual degree of brotherly affection; when a man ſhuts his breaſt

PART II. against compassion, and refuses to relieve the misery of his fellow-creatures, when he can with the greatest ease; in all these cases, though every body blames the conduct, nobody imagines that those who might have reason, perhaps, to expect more kindness, have any right to extort it by force. The sufferer can only complain, and the spectator can intermeddle no other way than by advice and persuasion. Upon all such occasions, for equals to use force against one another, would be thought the highest degree of insolence and presumption.

A superior may, indeed, sometimes, with universal approbation, oblige those under his jurisdiction to behave, in this respect, with a certain degree of propriety to one another. The laws of all civilized nations oblige parents to maintain their children, and children to maintain their parents, and impose upon men many other duties of beneficence. The civil magistrate is entrusted with the power not only of preserving the public peace by restraining injustice, but of promoting the prosperity of the commonwealth, by establishing good discipline, and by discouraging every sort of vice and impropriety; he may prescribe rules, therefore, which not only prohibit mutual injuries among fellow-citizens, but command mutual good offices to a certain degree. When the sovereign commands what is merely indifferent, and what, antecedent to his orders, might have been omitted without any blame, it becomes not only blamable but punishable to disobey him. When he

 commands,

commands, therefore, what, antecedent to any such order, could not have been omitted without the greateſt blame, it ſurely becomes much more puniſhable to be wanting in obedience. Of all the duties of a law-giver, however, this perhaps is that which it requires the greateſt delicacy and reſerve to execute with propriety and judgment. To neglect it altogether expoſes the commonwealth to many groſs diſorders and ſhocking enormities, and to puſh it too far is deſtructive of all liberty, ſecurity, and juſtice.

Though the mere want of beneficence ſeems to merit no puniſhment from equals, the greater exertions of that virtue appear to deſerve the higheſt reward. By being productive of the greateſt good, they are the natural and approved objects of the livelieſt gratitude. Though the breach of juſtice, on the contrary, expoſes to puniſhment, the obſervance of the rules of that virtue ſeems ſcarce to deſerve any reward. There is, no doubt, a propriety in the practice of juſtice, and it merits, upon that account, all the approbation which is due to propriety. But as it does no real poſitive good, it is entitled to very little gratitude. Mere juſtice is, upon moſt occaſions, but a negative virtue, and only hinders us from hurting our neighbour. The man who barely abſtains from violating either the perſon, or the eſtate, or the reputation of his neighbours, has ſurely very little poſitive merit. He fulfils, however, all the rules of what is peculiarly called juſtice, and does every thing which

PART II. which his equals can with propriety force him to do, or which they can punish him for not doing. We may often fulfil all the rules of justice by sitting still and doing nothing.

As every man doth, so shall it be done to him, and retaliation seems to be the great law which is dictated to us by Nature. Beneficence and generosity we think due to the generous and beneficent. Those whose hearts never open to the feelings of humanity, should, we think, be shut out in the same manner, from the affections of all their fellow-creatures, and be allowed to live in the midst of society, as in a great desert where there is nobody to care for them, or to inquire after them. The violator of the laws of justice ought to be made to feel himself that evil which he has done to another; and since no regard to the sufferings of his brethren is capable of restraining him, he ought to be over-awed by the fear of his own. The man who is barely innocent, who only observes the laws of justice with regard to others, and merely abstains from hurting his neighbours, can merit only that his neighbours in their turn should respect his innocence, and that the same laws should be religiously observed with regard to him.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Of the ſenſe of Juſtice, of Remorſe, and of the conſciouſneſs of Merit.

THERE can be no proper motive for hurting our neighbour, there can be no incitement to do evil to another, which mankind will go along with, except juſt indignation for evil which that other has done to us. To diſturb his happineſs merely becauſe it ſtands in the way of our own, to take from him what is of real uſe to him merely becauſe it may be of equal or of more uſe to us, or to indulge, in this manner, at the expence of other people, the natural preference which every man has for his own happineſs above that of other people, is what no impartial ſpectator can go along with. Every man is, no doubt, by nature, firſt and principally recommended to his own care; and as he is fitter to take care of himſelf than of any other perſon, it is fit and right that it ſhould be ſo. Every man, therefore, is much more deeply intereſted in whatever immediately concerns himſelf, than in what concerns any other man: and to hear, perhaps, of the death of another perſon, with whom we have no particular connexion, will give us leſs concern, will ſpoil our ſtomach, or break our reſt much leſs than a very inſignificant diſaſter which has

PART II.

befallen ourſelves. But though the ruin of our neighbour may affect us much leſs than a very ſmall misfortune of our own, we muſt not ruin him to prevent that ſmall misfortune, nor even to prevent our own ruin. We muſt, here, as in all other caſes, view ourſelves not ſo much according to that light in which we may naturally appear to ourſelves, as according to that in which we naturally appear to others. Though every man may, according to the proverb, be the whole world to himſelf, to the reſt of mankind he is a moſt inſignificant part of it. Though his own happineſs may be of more importance to him than that of all the world beſides, to every other perſon it is of no more conſequence than that of any other man. Though it may be true, therefore, that every individual, in his own breaſt, naturally prefers himſelf to all mankind, yet he dares not look mankind in the face, and avow that he acts according to this principle. He feels that in this preference they can never go along with him, and that how natural ſoever it may be to him, it muſt always appear exceſſive and extravagant to them. When he views himſelf in the light in which he is conſcious that others will view him, he ſees that to them he is but one of the multitude in no reſpect better than any other in it. If he would act ſo as that the impartial ſpectator may enter into the principles of his conduct, which is what of all things he has the greateſt deſire to do, he muſt, upon this, as upon all other occaſions, humble the arrogance of his ſelf-love, and bring it

it down to ſomething which other men can go along with. They will indulge it ſo far as to allow him to be more anxious about, and to purſue with more earneſt aſſiduity, his own happineſs than that of any other perſon. Thus far, whenever they place themſelves in his ſituation, they will readily go along with him. In the race for wealth, and honours, and preferments, he may run as hard as he can, and ſtrain every nerve and every muſcle, in order to outſtrip all his competitors. But if he ſhould juſtle, or throw down any of them, the indulgence of the ſpectators is entirely at an end. It is a violation of fair play, which they cannot admit of. This man is to them, in every reſpect, as good as he: they do not enter into that ſelf-love by which he prefers himſelf ſo much to this other, and cannot go along with the motive from which he hurt him. They readily, therefore, ſympathize with the natural reſentment of the injured, and the offender becomes the object of their hatred and indignation. He is ſenſible that he becomes ſo, and feels that thoſe ſentiments are ready to burſt out from all ſides againſt him.

As the greater and more irreparable the evil that is done, the reſentment of the ſufferer runs naturally the higher; ſo does likewiſe the ſympathetic indignation of the ſpectator, as well as the ſenſe of guilt in the agent. Death is the greateſt evil which one man can inflict upon another, and excites the higheſt degree of reſentment in thoſe who are immediately connected with

PART II.

with the ſlain. Murder, therefore, is the moſt atrocious of all crimes which affect individuals only, in the ſight both of mankind, and of the perſon who has committed it. To be deprived of that which we are poſſeſſed of, is a greater evil than to be diſappointed of what we have only the expectation. Breach of property, therefore, theft and robbery, which take from us what we are poſſeſſed of, are greater crimes than breach of contract, which only diſappoints us of what we expected. The moſt ſacred laws of juſtice, therefore, thoſe whoſe violation ſeems to call loudeſt for vengeance and puniſhment, are the laws which guard the life and perſon of our neighbour; the next are thoſe which guard his property and poſſeſſions; and laſt of all come thoſe which guard what are called his perſonal rights, or what is due to him from the promiſes of others.

The violator of the more ſacred laws of juſtice can never reflect on the ſentiments which mankind muſt entertain with regard to him, without feeling all the agonies of ſhame, and horror, and conſternation. When his paſſion is gratified, and he begins coolly to reflect on his paſt conduct, he can enter into none of the motives which influenced it. They appear now as deteſtable to him as they did always to other people. By ſympathizing with the hatred and abhorrence which other men muſt entertain for him, he becomes in ſome meaſure the object of his own hatred and abhorrence. The ſituation of the perſon, who ſuffered by his injuſtice,

now

now calls upon his pity. He is grieved at the thought of it; regrets the unhappy effects of his own conduct, and feels at the same time that they have rendered him the proper object of the resentment and indignation of mankind, and of what is the natural consequence of resentment, vengeance and punishment. The thought of this perpetually haunts him, and fills him with terror and amazement. He dares no longer look society in the face, but imagines himself as it were rejected, and thrown out from the affections of all mankind. He cannot hope for the consolation of sympathy in this his greatest and most dreadful distress. The remembrance of his crimes has shut out all fellow-feeling with him from the hearts of his fellow-creatures. The sentiments which they entertain with regard to him, are the very thing which he is most afraid of. Every thing seems hostile, and he would be glad to fly to some inhospitable desert, where he might never more behold the face of a human creature, nor read in the countenance of mankind the condemnation of his crimes. But solitude is still more dreadful than society. His own thoughts can present him with nothing but what is black, unfortunate, and disastrous, the melancholy forebodings of incomprehensible misery and ruin. The horror of solitude drives him back into society, and he comes again into the presence of mankind, astonished to appear before them, loaded with shame and distracted with fear, in order to supplicate some little protection from the countenance

SECT. II.

PART II.

tenance of thoſe very judges, ıo he knows h
already all unanimouſly condemned him. S
is the nature of that ſentiment, which is p
perly called remorſe; of all the ſentiments wh
can enter the human breaſt the moſt dread
It is made up of ſhame from the ſenſe of t
impropriety of paſt conduct; of grief for t
effects of it; of pity for thoſe who ſuffer by
and of the dread and terror of puniſhment fr
the conſciouſneſs of the juſtly provoked reſ
ment of all rational creatures.

The oppoſite behaviour naturally inſpires
oppoſite ſentiment. The man who, not fr
frivolous fancy, but from proper motives, h
performed a generous action, when he lo
forward to thoſe whom he has ſerved, fe
himſelf to be the natural object of their lo
and gratitude, and, by ſympathy with the
of the eſteem and approbation of all mankin
And when he looks backward to the moti
from which he acted, and ſurveys it in the lig
in which the indifferent ſpectator will ſurvey
he ſtill continues to enter into it, and applau
himſelf by ſympathy with the approbation
this ſuppoſed impartial judge. In both th
points of view his own conduct appears to h
every way agreeable. His mind, at the thoug
of it, is filled with cheerfulneſs, ſerenity, a
compoſure. He is in friendſhip and harmo
with all mankind, a d looks upon his fello
creatures with co ence and benevolent fa
faction, ſecure t he has rendered himſ
worthy of their favourable regards.

t

the combination of all these sentiments consists the consciousness of merit, or of deserved reward. SECT. II.

CHAP. III.

Of the utility of this constitution of Nature.

IT is thus that man, who can subsist only in society, was fitted by nature to that situation for which he was made. All the members of human society stand in need of each others assistance, and are likewise exposed to mutual injuries. Where the necessary assistance is reciprocally afforded from love, from gratitude, from friendship, and esteem, the society flourishes and is happy. All the different members of it are bound together by the agreeable bands of love and affection, and are, as it were, drawn to one common centre of mutual good offices.

But though the necessary assistance should not be afforded from such generous and disinterested motives, though among the different members of the society there should be no mutual love and affection, the society, though less happy and agreeable, will not necessarily be dissolved. Society may subsist among different men, as among different merchants, from a sense of its utility, without any mutual love or affection; and though no man in it should owe any obliga-

PART II.

tion, or be bound in gratitude to any other, it may ſtill be upheld by a mercenary exchange of good offices according to an agreed valuation.

Society, however, cannot ſubſiſt among thoſe who are at all times ready to hurt and injure one another. The moment that injury begins, the moment that mutual reſentment and animoſity take place, all the bands of it are broke aſunder, and the different members of which it conſiſted are, as it were, diſſipated and ſcattered abroad by the violence and oppoſition of their diſcordant affections. If there is any ſociety among robbers and murderers, they muſt at leaſt, according to the trite obſervation, abſtain from robbing and murdering one another. Beneficence, therefore, is leſs eſſential to the exiſtence of ſociety than juſtice. Society may ſubſiſt, though not in the moſt comfortable ſtate, without beneficence; but the prevalence of injuſtice muſt utterly deſtroy it.

Though Nature, therefore, exhorts mankind to acts of beneficence, by the pleaſing conſciouſneſs of deſerved reward, ſhe has not thought it neceſſary to guard and enforce the practice of it by the terrors of merited puniſhment in caſe it ſhould be neglected. It is the ornament which embelliſhes, not the foundation which ſupports the building, and which it was, therefore, ſufficient to recommend, but by no means neceſſary to impoſe. Juſtice, on the contrary, is the main pillar that upholds the whole edifice. If it is removed, the great, the immenſe fabric of human ſociety, that fabric which to raiſe and ſupport

ſupport ſeems in this world, if I may ſay ſo, to have been the peculiar and darling care of Nature, muſt in a moment crumble into atoms. In order to enforce the obſervation of juſtice, therefore, Nature has implanted in the human breaſt that conſcioufneſs of ill-deſert, thoſe terrors of merited puniſhment which attend upon its violation, as the great ſafeguards of the aſſociation of mankind, to protect the weak, to curb the violent, and to chaſtiſe the guilty. Men, though naturally ſympathetic, feel ſo little for another, with whom they have no particular connexion, in compariſon of what they feel for themſelves; the miſery of one, who is merely their fellow-creature, is of ſo little importance to them in compariſon even of a ſmall conveniency of their own; they have it ſo much in their power to hurt him, and may have ſo many temptations to do ſo, that if this principle did not ſtand up within them in his defence, and overawe them into a reſpect for his innocence, they would, like wild beaſts, be at all times ready to fly upon him; and a man would enter an aſſembly of men as he enters a den of lions.

SECT. II.

In every part of the univerſe we obſerve means adjuſted with the niceſt artifice to the ends which they are intended to produce; and in the mechaniſm of a plant, or animal body, admire how every thing is contrived for advancing the two great purpoſes of nature, the ſupport of the individual, and the propagation of the ſpecies. But in theſe, and in all ſuch objects, we ſtill diſtinguiſh the efficient from the

PART II. final cause of their several motions and organizations. The digestion of the food, the circulation of the blood, and the secretion of the several juices which are drawn from it, are operations all of them necessary for the great purposes of animal life. Yet we never endeavour to account for them from those purposes as from their efficient causes, nor imagine that the blood circulates, or that the food digests of its own accord, and with a view or intention to the purposes of circulation or digestion. The wheels of the watch are all admirably adjusted to the end for which it was made, the pointing of the hour. All their various motions conspire in the nicest manner to produce this effect. If they were endowed with a desire and intention to produce it, they could not do it better. Yet we never ascribe any such desire or intention to them, but to the watch-maker, and we know that they are put into motion by a spring, which intends the effect it produces as little as they do. But though, in accounting for the operations of bodies, we never fail to distinguish in this manner the efficient from the final cause, in accounting for those of the mind we are very apt to confound these two different things with one another. When by natural principles we are led to advance those ends which a refined and enlightened reason would recommend to us, we are very apt to impute to that reason, as to their efficient cause, the sentiments and actions by which we advance those ends, and to imagine that to be the wisdom of man, which in reality

wiſdom of God. Upon a ſuperficial view, SECT. II.
ıuſe ſeems ſufficient to produce the effects
are aſcribed to it; and the ſyſtem of
ı nature ſeems to be more ſimple and
ıble when all its different operations are
ı manner deduced from a ſingle principle.
ſociety cannot ſubſiſt unleſs the laws of
ı are tolerably obſerved, as no ſocial inter-
ı can take place among men who do not
ally abſtain from injuring one another;
onſideration of this neceſſity, it has been
ht, was the ground upon which we ap-
d of the enforcement of the laws of juſ-
ıy the puniſhment of thoſe who violated
Man, it has been ſaid, has a natural
or ſociety, and deſires that the union of
ind ſhould be preſerved for its own ſake,
ıough he himſelf was to derive no benefit
it. The orderly and flouriſhing ſtate of
y is agreeable to him, and he takes delight
ıtemplating it. Its diſorder and confuſion,
e contrary, is the object of his averſion,
e is chagrined at whatever tends to pro-
it. He is ſenſible too that his own inte-
connected with the proſperity of ſociety,
ıat the happineſs, perhaps the preſervation
exiſtence, depends upon its preſervation.
every account, therefore, he has an ab-
ıce at whatever can tend to deſtroy ſo-
and is willing to make uſe of every means,
can hinder ſo hated and ſo dreadful an
Injuſtice neceſſarily tends to deſtroy it.
appearance of injuſtice, therefore, alarms

PART II. him, and he runs (if I may ſay ſo), to ſtop t progreſs of what, if allowed to go on, wou quickly put an end to every thing that is d to him. If he cannot reſtrain it by gentle a fair means, he muſt bear it down by force a violence, and at any rate muſt put a ſtop to further progreſs. Hence it is, they ſay, th he often approves of the enforcement of t laws of juſtice even by the capital puniſhme of thoſe who violate them. The diſturber the public peace is hereby removed out of t world, and others are terrified by his fate fro imitating his example.

Such is the account commonly given of o approbation of the puniſhment of injuſtic And ſo far this account is undoubtedly tru that we frequently have occaſion to confi our natural ſenſe of the propriety and fitneſs puniſhment, by reflecting how neceſſary it is f preſerving the order of ſociety. When the guil is about to ſuffer that juſt retaliation, which t natural indignation of mankind tells them is d to his crimes; when the inſolence of his inj tice is broken and humbled by the terror of l approaching puniſhment; when he ceaſes to l an object of fear, with the generous and h mane he begins to be an object of pity. T thought of what he is about to ſuffer exti guiſhes their reſentment for the ſufferings others to which he has given occaſion. Th are diſpoſed to pardon and forgive him, and ſave him from that puniſhment, which in all the cool hours they had conſidered as the retrib

tio

SECT. II.

n due to ſuch crimes. Here, therefore, they ve occaſion to call to their aſſiſtance the con- eration of the general intereſt of ſociety. ey counterbalance the impuſe of this weak d partial humanity by the dictates of a huma- y that is more generous and comprehenſive. ey reflect that mercy to the guilty is cruelty the innocent, and oppoſe to the emotions of mpaſſion which they feel for a particular per- , a more enlarged compaſſion which they feel mankind.

Sometimes too we have occaſion to defend propriety of obſerving the general rules of lice by the conſideration of their neceſſity to ſupport of ſociety. We frequently hear the ung and the licentious ridiculing the moſt red rules of morality, and profeſſing, ſome- es from the corruption, but more frequently m the vanity of their hearts, the moſt abomi- ble maxims of conduct. Our indignation ſes, and we are eager to refute and expoſe h deteſtable principles. But though it is ir intrinſic hatefulneſs and deteſtableneſs, ich originally inflames us againſt them, we unwilling to aſſign this as the ſole reaſon y we condemn them, or to pretend that it is rely becauſe we ourſelves hate and deteſt em. The reaſon, we think, would not appear be concluſive. Yet why ſhould it not; if we te and deteſt them becauſe they are the tural and proper objects of hatred and deteſt- ion? But when we are aſked why we ſhould

PART II. not act in ſuch or ſuch a manner, the very queſtion ſeems to ſuppoſe that, to thoſe who aſk it, this manner of acting does not appear to be for its own ſake the natural and proper object of thoſe ſentiments. We muſt ſhow them, therefore, that it ought to be ſo for the ſake of ſomething elſe. Upon this account we generally caſt about for other arguments, and the conſideration which firſt occurs to us, is the diſorder and confuſion of ſociety which would reſult from the univerſal prevalence of ſuch practices. We ſeldom fail, therefore, to inſiſt upon this topic.

But though it commonly requires no great diſcernment to ſee the deſtructive tendency of all licentious practices to the welfare of ſociety, it is ſeldom this conſideration which firſt animates us againſt them. All men, even the moſt ſtupid and unthinking, abhor fraud, perfidy and injuſtice, and delight to ſee them puniſhed. But few men have reflected upon the neceſſity of juſtice to the exiſtence of ſociety, how obvious ſoever that neceſſity may appear to be.

That it is not a regard to the preſervation of ſociety, which originally intereſts us in the puniſhment of crimes committed againſt individuals, may be demonſtrated by many obvious conſiderations. The concern which we take in the fortune and happineſs of individuals does not, in common caſes, ariſe from that which we take in the fortune and happineſs of ſociety. We are no more concerned for the

deſtruc-

ction or loſs of a ſingle man, becauſe this a member or part of ſociety, and becauſe uld be concerned for the deſtruction of , than we are concerned for the loſs of a guinea, becauſe this guinea is a part of a nd guineas, and becauſe we ſhould be ned for the loſs of the whole ſum. In r caſe does our regard for the individuals om our regard for the multitude: but in aſes our regard for the multitude is com- ed and made up of the particular regards we feel for the different individuals of it is compoſed. As when a ſmall ſum is y taken from us, we do not ſo much pro- the injury from a regard to the preſer- of our whole fortune, as from a regard t particular ſum which we have loſt; ſo ı ſingle man is injured or deſtroyed, we d the puniſhment of the wrong that has one to him, not ſo much from a concern e general intereſt of ſociety, as from a n for that very individual who has been l. It is to be obſerved, however, that oncern does not neceſſarily include in it gree of thoſe exquiſite ſentiments which mmonly called love, eſteem, and affec- nd by which we diſtinguiſh our particular ı and acquaintance. The concern which iſite for this, is no more than the gene- low-feeling which we have with every ierely becauſe he is our fellow-creature. ter into the reſentment even of an odious , when he is injured by thoſe to whom he

PART II. he has given no provocation. Our disapprob tion of his ordinary character and conduct do not in this case altogether prevent our fello feeling with his natural indignation; thou with those who are not either extremely ca did, or who have not been accustomed to co rect and regulate their natural sentiments b general rules, it is very apt to damp it.

Upon some occasions, indeed, we both puni and approve of punishment, merely from a vie to the general interest of society, which, w imagine, cannot otherwise be secured. Of th kind are all the punishments inflicted for breach of what is called either civil police, or milita discipline. Such crimes do not immediately directly hurt any particular person; but the remote consequences, it is supposed, do pr duce, or might produce, either a conside able inconveniency, or a great disorder in th society. A centinel, for example, who fa asleep upon his watch, suffers death by the la of war, because such carelessness might enda ger the whole army. This severity may, up many occasions, appear necessary, and, for th reason, just and proper. When the preservatio of an individual is inconsistent with the safe of a multitude, nothing can be more just th that the many should be preferred to the on Yet this punishment, how necessary soeve always appears to be excessively severe. Th natural atrocity of the crime seems to be little, and the punishment so great, that it with great difficulty that our heart can reco

ile itſelf to it. Though ſuch careleſſneſs appears very blamable, yet the thought of this rime does not naturally excite any ſuch reſentment as would prompt us to take ſuch dreadl revenge. A man of humanity muſt recolect himſelf, muſt make an effort, and exert his hole firmneſs and reſolution, before he can ring himſelf either to inflict it, or to go along ith it when it is inflicted by others. It is not, owever, in this manner, that he looks upon e juſt puniſhment of an ungrateful murderer r parricide. His heart, in this caſe, applauds ith ardour, and even with tranſport, the juſt taliation which ſeems due to ſuch deteſtable rimes, and which, if, by any accident, they ould happen to eſcape, he would be highly raged and diſappointed. The very different entiments with which the ſpectator views thoſe ifferent puniſhments, is a proof that his approation of the one is far from being founded upn the ſame principles with that of the other. le looks upon the centinel as an unfortunate ictim, who, indeed, muſt, and ought to be, evoted to the ſafety of numbers, but whom ill, in his heart, he would be glad to ſave; nd he is only ſorry, that the intereſt of the any ſhould oppoſe it. But if the murderer ould eſcape from puniſhment, it would excite is higheſt indignation, and he would call pon God to avenge, in another world, that rime which the injuſtice of mankind had negected to chaſtiſe upon earth.

For it well deſerves to be taken notice of, at we are ſo far from imagining that injuſtice ought

PART II.

ought to be punifhed in this life, mer account of the order of fociety, which otherwife be maintained, that Nature t us to hope, and religion, we fuppofe, aut us to expect, that it will be punifhed, e a life to come. Our fenfe of its ill defe fues it, if I may fay fo, even beyond the though the example of its punifhment cannot ferve to deter the reft of mankinc fee it not, who know it not, from being of the like practices here. The juftice of however, we think, ftill requires, that he hereafter avenge the injuries of the wido the fatherlefs, who are here fo often in with impunity. In every religion, and in fuperftition that the world has ever b accordingly, there has been a Tartarus a as an Elyfium; a place provided for the p ment of the wicked, as well as one fc reward of the juft.

SECTION III.

OF THE INFLUENCE OF FORTUNE UPON THE SENTIMENTS OF MANKIND, WITH REGARD TO THE MERIT OR DEMERIT OF ACTIONS.

INTRODUCTION.

SECT. III.

WHATEVER praiſe or blame can be due to any action, muſt belong either, firſt, to the intention, or affection of the heart, from which it proceeds, or, ſecondly, to the external action or movement of the body, which this affection gives occaſion to; or, laſtly, to the good or bad conſequences, which actually, and in fact, proceed from it. Theſe three different things conſtitute the whole nature and circumſtances of the action, and muſt be the foundation of whatever quality can belong to it.

That the two laſt of theſe three circumſtances cannot be the foundation of any praiſe or blame, is abundantly evident; nor has the contrary ever been aſſerted by any body. The external action or movement of the body is often the ſame in the moſt innocent and in the moſt blamable actions. He who ſhoots a bird, and he who ſhoots a man, both of them perform the ſame external movement: each of them draws the trigger of a gun. The conſe-

PART II. quences which actually, and in fact, happen to proceed from any action, are, if possible, still more indifferent either to praise or blame, than even the external movement of the body. As they depend, not upon the agent, but upon fortune, they cannot be the proper foundation for any sentiment, of which his character and conduct are the objects.

The only consequences for which he can be answerable, or by which he can deserve either approbation or disapprobation of any kind, are those which were some way or other intended, or those which, at least, show some agreeable or disagreeable quality in the intention of the heart, from which he acted. To the intention or affection of the heart, therefore, to the propriety or impropriety, to the beneficence or hurtfulness of the design, all praise or blame, all approbation or disapprobation, of any kind, which can justly be bestowed upon any action, must ultimately belong.

When this maxim is thus proposed, in abstract and general terms, there is nobody who does not agree to it. Its self-evident justice is acknowledged by all the world, and there is not a dissenting voice among all mankind. Every body allows, that how different soever the accidental, the unintended and unforeseen consequences of different actions, yet, if the intentions or affections from which they arose were, on the one hand, equally proper and equally beneficent, or, on the other, equally improper and equally malevolent, the merit or demerit of the

tions is ſtill the ſame, and the agent is y the ſuitable object either of gratitude or ntment.

how well ſoever we may ſeem to be per- l of the truth of this equitable maxim, we conſider it after this manner, in ab- yet when we come to particular caſes, tual conſequences which happen to pro- from any action, have a very great effect our ſentiments concerning its merit or it, and almoſt always either enhance or ſh our ſenſe of both. Scarce, in any one ce, perhaps, will our ſentiments be found, examination, to be entirely regulated by ule, which we all acknowledge ought en- to regulate them.

s irregularity of ſentiment, which every eels, which ſcarce any body is ſufficiently of, and which nobody is willing to ac- edge, I proceed now to explain; and I onſider, firſt, the cauſe which gives occa- it, or the mechaniſm by which nature ces it; ſecondly, the extent of its in- e; and, laſt of all, the end which it rs, or the purpoſe which the Author of ſeems to have intended by it.

CHAP.

PART II.

CHAP. I.

Of the cauſes of this Influence of Fort

THE cauſes of pain and pleaſure, w they are, or however they operat to be the objects, which, in all animals, diately excite thoſe two paſſions of gratit reſentment. They are excited by inan as well as by animated objects. We are for a moment, even at the ſtone that h A child beats it, a dog barks at it, a man is apt to curſe it. The leaſt reflect deed, corrects this ſentiment, and w become ſenſible, that what has no feeli very improper object of revenge. Wh miſchief, however, is very great, the which cauſed it becomes diſagreeable to after, and we take pleaſure to burn or it. We ſhould treat, in this manner, the ment which had accidentally been the c the death of a friend, and we ſhould ofte ourſelves guilty of a ſort of inhumanity neglected to vent this abſurd ſort of ven upon it.

We conceive, in the ſame manner, a gratitude for thoſe inanimated objects, have been the cauſes of great, or frequen ſure to us. The ſailor, who, as ſoon as aſhore, ſhould mend his fire with the plan which he had juſt eſcaped from a ſhip

would ſeem to be guilty of an unnatural action. We ſhould expect that he would rather preſerve it with care and affection, as a monument that was, in ſome meaſure, dear to him. A man grows fond of a ſnuff-box, of a pen-knife, of a ſtaff which he has long made uſe of, and conceives ſomething like a real love and affection for them. If he breaks or loſes them, he is vexed out of all proportion to the value of the damage. The houſe which we have long lived in, the tree, whoſe verdure and ſhade we have long enjoyed, are both looked upon with a ſort of reſpect that ſeems due to ſuch benefactors. The decay of the one, or the ruin of the other, affects us with a kind of melancholy, though we ſhould ſuſtain no loſs by it. The Dryads and the Lares of the ancients, a ſort of genii of trees and houſes, were probably firſt ſuggeſted by this ſort of affection, which the authors of thoſe ſuperſtitions felt for ſuch objects, and which ſeemed unreaſonable, if there was nothing animated about him.

But, before any thing can be the proper object of gratitude or reſentment, it muſt not only be the cauſe of pleaſure or pain, it muſt likewiſe be capable of feeling them. Without this other quality, thoſe paſſions cannot vent themſelves with any ſort of ſatisfaction upon it. As they are excited by the cauſes of pleaſure and pain, ſo their gratification conſiſts in retaliating thoſe ſenſations upon what gave occaſion to them; which it is to no

 purpoſe

PART II. purpose to attempt upon what has no sensibility. Animals, therefore, are less improper objects of gratitude and resentment than inanimated objects. The dog that bites, the ox that gores, are both of them punished. If they have been the causes of the death of any person, neither the public, nor the relations of the slain, can be satisfied, unless they are put to death in their turn: nor is this merely for the security of the living, but, in some measure, to revenge the injury of the dead. Those animals, on the contrary, that have been remarkably serviceable to their masters, become the objects of a very lively gratitude. We are shocked at the brutality of that officer, mentioned in the Turkish Spy, who stabbed the horse that had carried him across an arm of the sea, lest that animal should afterwards distinguish some other person by a similar adventure.

But, though animals are not only the causes of pleasure and pain, but are also capable of feeling those sensations, they are still far from being complete and perfect objects, either of gratitude or resentment; and those passions still feel, that there is something wanting to their entire gratification. What gratitude chiefly desires, is not only to make the benefactor feel pleasure in his turn, but to make him conscious that he meets with this reward on account of his past conduct, to make him pleased with that conduct, and to satisfy him that the person upon whom he bestowed his good offices was not un-

worthy

hy of them. What moſt of all charms us in
benefactor, is the concord between his ſenti-
s and our own, with regard to what intereſts
nearly as the worth of our own character,
he eſteem that is due to us. We are de-
ed to find a perſon who values us as we
ourſelves, and diſtinguiſhes us from the
of mankind, with an attention not unlike
with which we diſtinguiſh ourſelves. To
tain in him theſe agreeable and flattering
nents, is one of the chief ends propoſed by
eturns we are diſpoſed to make to him. A
ous mind often diſdains the intereſted
ht of extorting new favours from its bene-
, by what may be called the importunities
gratitude. But to preſerve and to in-
his eſteem, is an intereſt which the
eſt mind does not think unworthy of its
ion. And this is the foundation of what
nerly obſerved, that when we cannot enter
he motives of our benefactor, when his
ct and character appear unworthy of our
bation, let his ſervices have been ever ſo
, our gratitude is always ſenſibly diminiſhed.
re leſs flattered by the diſtinction; and to
ve the eſteem of ſo weak, or ſo worthleſs
on, ſeems to be an object which does not
e to be purſued for its own ſake.

e object, on the contrary, which reſent-
is chiefly intent upon, is not ſo much to
our enemy feel pain in his turn, as to
him conſcious that he feels it upon ac-
of his paſt conduct, to make him repent

PART II. of that conduct, and to make him ſenſible, that the perſon whom he injured did not deſerve to be treated in that manner. What chiefly enrages us againſt the man who injures or inſults us, is the little account which he ſeems to make of us, the unreaſonable preference which he gives to himſelf above us, and that abſurd ſelf-love, by which he ſeems to imagine, that other people may be ſacrificed at any time, to his conveniency or his humour. The glaring impropriety of this conduct, the groſs inſolence and injuſtice which it ſeems to involve in it, often ſhock and exaſperate us more than all the miſchief which we have ſuffered. To bring him back to a more juſt ſenſe of what is due to other people, to make him ſenſible of what he owes us, and of the wrong that he has done to us, is frequently the principal end propoſed in our revenge, which is always imperfect when it cannot accompliſh this. When our enemy appears to have done us no injury, when we are ſenſible that he acted quite properly, that, in his ſituation, we ſhould have done the ſame thing, and that we deſerved from him all the miſchief we met with; in that caſe, if we have the leaſt ſpark either of candour or juſtice, we can entertain no ſort of reſentment.

Before any thing, therefore, can be the complete and proper object, either of gratitude or reſentment, it muſt poſſeſs three different qualifications. Firſt, it muſt be the cauſe of pleaſure in the one caſe, and of pain in the other. Secondly, it muſt be capable of feeling thoſe ſenſations.

ſenſations. And, thirdly, it muſt not only have produced thoſe ſenſations, but it muſt have produced them from deſign, and from a deſign that is approved of in the one caſe, and diſapproved of in the other. It is by the firſt qualification, that any object is capable of exciting thoſe paſſions: it is by the ſecond, that it is in any reſpect capable of gratifying them: the third qualification is not only neceſſary for their complete ſatisfaction, but as it gives a pleaſure or pain that is both exquiſite and peculiar, it is likewiſe an additional exciting cauſe of thoſe paſſions.

As what gives pleaſure or pain, therefore, either in one way or another, is the ſole exciting cauſe of gratitude and reſentment; though the intentions of any perſon ſhould be ever ſo proper and beneficent, on the one hand, or ever ſo improper and malevolent on the other; yet, if he has failed in producing either the good or the evil which he intended, as one of the exciting cauſes is wanting in both caſes, leſs gratitude ſeems due to him in the one, and leſs reſentment in the other. And, on the contrary, though in the intentions of any perſon, there was either no laudable degree of benevolence on the one hand, or no blameable degree of malice on the other; yet, if his actions ſhould produce either great good or great evil, as one of the exciting cauſes takes place upon both theſe occaſions, ſome gratitude is apt to ariſe towards him in the one, and ſome reſentment in the other. A ſhadow of merit ſeems to fall upon

PART II. him in the firſt, a ſhadow of demerit in the ſecond. And, as the conſequences of actions are altogether under the empire of Fortune, hence ariſes her influence upon the ſentiments of mankind with regard to merit and demerit.

CHAP. II.

Of the extent of this Influence of Fortune.

THE effect of this influence of fortune is, firſt, to diminiſh our ſenſe of the merit or demerit of thoſe actions which aroſe from the moſt laudable or blameable intentions, when they fail of producing their propoſed effects: and, ſecondly, to increaſe our ſenſe of the merit or demerit of actions, beyond what is due to the motives or affections from which they proceed, when they accidentally give occaſion either to extraordinary pleaſure or pain.

1. Firſt, I ſay, though the intentions of any perſon ſhould be ever ſo proper and beneficent, on the one hand, or ever ſo improper and malevolent, on the other, yet, if they fail in producing their effects, his merit ſeems imperfect in the one caſe, and his demerit incomplete in the other. Nor is this irregularity of ſentiment felt only by thoſe who are immediately affected by the conſequences of any action. It is felt, in ſome meaſure, even by the impartial ſpectator.

tor. The man who ſolicits an office for another, without obtaining it, is regarded as his friend, and ſeems to deſerve his love and affection. But the man who not only ſolicits, but procures it, is more peculiarly conſidered as his patron and benefactor, and is entitled to his reſpect and gratitude. The perſon obliged, we are apt to think, may, with ſome juſtice, imagine himſelf on a level with the firſt: but we cannot enter into his ſentiments, if he does not feel himſelf inferior to the ſecond. It is common indeed to ſay, that we are equally obliged to the man who has endeavoured to ſerve, as to him who actually did ſo. It is the ſpeech which we conſtantly make upon every unſucceſsful attempt of this kind; but which, like all other fine ſpeeches, muſt be underſtood with a grain of allowance. The ſentiments which a man of generoſity entertains for the friend who fails, may often indeed be nearly the ſame with thoſe which he conceives for him who ſucceeds: and the more generous he is, the more nearly will thoſe ſentiments approach to an exact level. With the truly generous, to be beloved, to be eſteemed by thoſe whom they themſelves think worthy of eſteem, gives more pleaſure, and thereby excites more gratitude, than all the advantages which they can ever expect from thoſe ſentiments. When they loſe thoſe advantages therefore, they ſeem to loſe but a trifle, which is ſcarce worth regarding. They ſtill however loſe ſomething. Their pleaſure therefore, and conſequently their

PART II.

gratitude, is not perfectly complete: and accordingly if, between the friend who fails and the friend who ſucceeds, all other circumſtances are equal, there will, even in the nobleſt and the beſt mind, be ſome little difference of affection in favour of him who ſucceeds. Nay, ſo unjuſt are mankind in this reſpect, that though the intended benefit ſhould be procured, yet if it is not procured by the means of a particular benefactor, they are apt to think that leſs gratitude is due to the man, who with the beſt intentions in the world could do no more than help it a little forward. As their gratitude is in this caſe divided among the different perſons who contributed to their pleaſure, a ſmaller ſhare of it ſeems due to any one. Such a perſon, we hear men commonly ſay, intended no doubt to ſerve us; and we really believe exerted himſelf to the utmoſt of his abilities for that purpoſe. We are not, however, obliged to him for this benefit; ſince, had it not been for the concurrence of others, all that he could have done would never have brought it about. This conſideration, they imagine, ſhould, even in the eyes of the impartial ſpectator, diminiſh the debt which they owe to him. The perſon himſelf who has unſucceſsfully endeavoured to confer a benefit, has by no means the ſame dependency upon the gratitude of the man whom he meant to oblige, nor the ſame ſenſe of his own merit towards him, which he would have had in the caſe of ſucceſs.

Even

Even the merit of talents and abilities which ſome accident has hindered from producing their effects, ſeems in ſome meaſure imperfect, even to thoſe who are fully convinced of their capacity to produce them. The general who has been hindered by the envy of miniſters from gaining ſome great advantage over the enemies of his country, regrets the loſs of the opportunity for ever after. Nor is it only upon account of the public that he regrets it. He laments that he was hindered from performing an action which would have added a new luſtre to his character in his own eyes, as well as in thoſe of every other perſon. It ſatisfies neither himſelf nor others to reflect that the plan or deſign was all that depended on him, that no greater capacity was required to execute it than what was neceſſary to concert it: that he was allowed to be every way capable of executing it, and that had he been permitted to go on, ſucceſs was infallible. He ſtill did not execute it; and though he might deſerve all the approbation which is due to a magnanimous and great deſign, he ſtill wanted the actual merit of having performed a great action. To take the management of any affair of public concern from the man who has almoſt brought it to a concluſion, is regarded as the moſt invidious injuſtice. As he had done ſo much, he ſhould, we think, have been allowed to acquire the complete merit of putting an end to it. It was objected to Pompey, that he came in upon the victories

PART II.

victories of Lucullus, and gathered thoſe laurels which were due to the fortune and valour of another. The glory of Lucullus, it ſeems, was leſs complete even in the opinion of his own friends, when he was not permitted to finiſh that conqueſt which his conduct and courage had put in the power of almoſt any man to finiſh. It mortifies an architect when his plans are either not executed at all, or when they are ſo far altered as to ſpoil the effect of the building. The plan, however, is all that depends upon the architect. The whole of his genius is, to good judges, as completely diſcovered in that as in the actual execution. But a plan does not, even to the moſt intelligent, give the ſame pleaſure as a noble and magnificent building. They may diſcover as much both of taſte and genius in the one as in the other. But their effects are ſtill vaſtly different, and the amuſement derived from the firſt, never approaches to the wonder and admiration which are ſometimes excited by the ſecond. We may believe of many men, that their talents are ſuperior to thoſe of Cæſar and Alexander; and that in the ſame ſituations they would perform ſtill greater actions. In the mean time, however, we do not behold them with that aſtoniſhment and admiration with which thoſe two heroes have been regarded in all ages and nations. The calm judgments of the mind may approve of them more, but they want the ſplendour of great actions to dazzle and tranſport it. The ſuperiority of virtues and talents

talents has not, even upon thoſe who acknowledge that ſuperiority, the ſame effect with the ſuperiority of atchievements. SECT. III.

As the merit of an unſucceſsful attempt to do good ſeems thus, in the eyes of ungrateful mankind, to be diminiſhed by the miſcarriage, ſo does likewiſe the demerit of an unſucceſsful attempt to do evil. The deſign to commit a crime, how clearly ſoever it may be proved, is ſcarce ever puniſhed with the ſame ſeverity as the actual commiſſion of it. The caſe of treaſon is perhaps the only exception. That crime immediately affecting the being of the government itſelf, the government is naturally more jealous of it than of any other. In the puniſhment of treaſon, the ſovereign reſents the injuries which are immediately done to himſelf: in the puniſhment of other crimes, he reſents thoſe which are done to other men. It is his own reſentment which he indulges in the one caſe; it is that of his ſubjects which by ſympathy he enters into in the other. In the firſt caſe, therefore, as he judges in his own cauſe, he is very apt to be more violent and ſanguinary in his puniſhments than the impartial ſpectator can approve of. His reſentment too riſes here upon ſmaller occaſions, and does not always, as in other caſes, wait for the perpetration of the crime, or even for the attempt to commit it. A treaſonable concert, though nothing has been done, or even attempted in conſequence of it, nay, a treaſonable converſation, is in many countries puniſhed in the ſame manner as the actual commiſſion

PART II.

miſſion of treaſon. With regard to all other crimes, the mere deſign, upon which no attempt has followed, is ſeldom puniſhed at all, and is never puniſhed ſeverely. A criminal deſign, and a criminal action, it may be ſaid indeed, do not neceſſarily ſuppoſe the ſame degree of depravity, and ought not therefore to be ſubjected to the ſame puniſhment. We are capable, it may be ſaid, of reſolving, and even of taking meaſures to execute, many things which, when it comes to the point, we feel ourſelves altogether incapable of executing. But this reaſon can have no place when the deſign has been carried the length of the laſt attempt. The man, however, who fires a piſtol at his enemy but miſſes him, is puniſhed with death by the laws of ſcarce any country. By the old law of Scotland, though he ſhould wound him, yet, unleſs death enſues within a certain time, the aſſaſſin is not liable to the laſt puniſhment. The reſentment of mankind, however, runs ſo high againſt this crime, their terror for the man who ſhows himſelf capable of committing it, is ſo great, that the mere attempt to commit it ought in all countries to be capital. The attempt to commit ſmaller crimes is almoſt always puniſhed very lightly, and ſometimes is not puniſhed at all. The thief, whoſe hand has been caught in his neighbour's pocket before he had taken any thing out of it, is puniſhed with ignominy only. If he had got time to take away an handkerchief, he would have been put to death. The houſe-breaker, who has been found ſetting a ladder

ladder to his neighbour's window, but had not got into it, is not expoſed to the capital puniſhment. The attempt to raviſh is not puniſhed as a rape. The attempt to ſeduce a married woman is not puniſhed at all, though ſeduction is puniſhed ſeverely. Our reſentment againſt the perſon who only attempted to do a miſchief, is ſeldom ſo ſtrong as to bear us out in inflicting the ſame puniſhment upon him, which we ſhould have thought due if he had actually done it. In the one caſe, the joy of our deliverance alleviates our ſenſe of the atrocity of his conduct; in the other, the grief of our misfortune increaſes it. His real demerit, however, is undoubtedly the ſame in both caſes, ſince his intentions were equally criminal; and there is in this reſpect, therefore, an irregularity in the ſentiments of all men, and a conſequent relaxation of diſcipline in the laws of, I believe, all nations of the moſt civilized, as well as of the moſt barbarous. The humanity of a civilized people diſpoſes them either to diſpenſe with, or to mitigate puniſhments wherever their natural indignation is not goaded on by the conſequences of the crime. Barbarians, on the other hand, when no actual conſequence has happened from any action, are not apt to be very delicate or inquiſitive about the motives.

The perſon himſelf who either from paſſion, or from the influence of bad company, has reſolved, and perhaps taken meaſures to perpetrate ſome crime, but who has fortunately been prevented by an accident which put it out

PART II. of his power, is ſure, if he has any remains of conſcience, to regard this event all his life after as a great and ſignal deliverance. He can never think of it without returning thanks to Heaven, for having been thus graciouſly pleaſed to ſave him from the guilt in which he was juſt ready to plunge himſelf, and to hinder him from rendering all the reſt of his life a ſcene of horror, remorſe, and repentance. But though his hands are innocent, he is conſcious that his heart is equally guilty as if he had actually executed what he was ſo fully reſolved upon. It gives great eaſe to his conſcience, however, to conſider that the crime was not executed, though he knows that the failure aroſe from no virtue in him. He ſtill conſiders himſelf as leſs deſerving of puniſhment and reſentment; and this good fortune either diminiſhes, or takes away altogether, all ſenſe of guilt. To remember how much he was reſolved upon it, has no other effect than to make him regard his eſcape as the greater and more miraculous: for he ſtill fancies that he has eſcaped, and he looks back upon the danger to which his peace of mind was expoſed, with that terror, with which one who is in ſafety may ſometimes remember the hazard he was in of falling over a precipice, and ſhudder with horror at the thought.

2. The ſecond effect of this influence of fortune, is to increaſe our ſenſe of the merit or demerit of actions beyond what is due to the motives or affection from which they proceed, when they happen to give occaſion to extraordinary

SECT. III.

ſ pleaſure or pain. The agreeable or diſ-
able effects of the action often throw a
w of merit or demerit upon the agent,
ſh in his intention there was nothing that
ved either praiſe or blame, or at leaſt that
ved them in the degree in which we are
ſ beſtow them. Thus, even the meſſenger
d news is diſagreeable to us, and, on the
ary, we feel a ſort of gratitude for the
who brings us good tidings. For a mo-
we look upon them both as the authors,
ne of our good, the other of our bad for-
and regard them in ſome meaſure as if
had really brought about the events which
only give an account of. The firſt author
r joy is naturally the object of a tranſitory
tude: we embrace him with warmth and
ion, and ſhould be glad, during the inſtant
ur proſperity, to reward him as for ſome
l ſervice. By the cuſtom of all courts, the
r, who brings the news of a victory, is
led to conſiderable preferments, and the
ral always chuſes one of his principal fa-
ites to go upon ſo agreeable an errand.
firſt author of our ſorrow is, on the con-
, juſt as naturally the object of a tranſi-
reſentment. We can ſcarce avoid looking
him with chagrin and uneaſineſs; and
rude and brutal are apt to vent upon him
ſpleen which his intelligence gives occa-
to. Tigranes, King of Armenia, ſtruck
he head of the man who brought him the
account of the approach of a formidable

 enemy.

PART II.

enemy. To punish in this manner the author of bad tidings, seems barbarous and inhuman: yet, to reward the messenger of good news, is not disagreeable to us; we think it suitable to the bounty of kings. But why do we make this difference, since, if there is no fault in the one, neither is there any merit in the other? It is because any sort of reason seems sufficient to authorize the exertion of the social and benevolent affections; but it requires the most solid and substantial to make us enter into that of the unsocial and malevolent.

But though in general we are averse to enter into the unsocial and malevolent affections, though we lay it down for a rule that we ought never to approve of their gratification, unless so far as the malicious and unjust intention of the person, against whom they are directed, renders him their proper object; yet, upon some occasions, we relax of this severity. When the negligence of one man has occasioned some unintended damage to another, we generally enter so far into the resentment of the sufferer, as to approve of his inflicting a punishment upon the offender much beyond what the offence would have appeared to deserve, had no such unlucky consequence followed from it.

There is a degree of negligence, which would appear to deserve some chastisement though it should occasion no damage to any body. Thus, if a person should throw a large stone over a wall into a public street without giving warn-

ing to those who might be passing by, and without regarding where it was likely to fall, he would undoubtedly deserve some chastisement. A very accurate police would punish so absurd an action, even though it had done no mischief. The person who has been guilty of it, shows an insolent contempt of the happiness and safety of others. There is real injustice in his conduct. He wantonly exposes his neighbour to what no man in his senses would chuse to expose himself, and evidently wants that sense of what is due to his fellow-creatures, which is the basis of justice and of society. Gross negligence therefore is, in the law, said to be almost equal to malicious design*. When any unlucky consequences happen from such carelessness, the person who has been guilty of it, is often punished as if he had really intended those consequences; and his conduct, which was only thoughtless and insolent, and what deserved some chastisement, is considered as atrocious, and as liable to the severest punishment. Thus if, by the imprudent action abovementioned, he should accidentally kill a man, he is, by the laws of many countries, particularly by the old law of Scotland, liable to the last punishment. And though this is no doubt excessively severe, it is not altogether inconsistent with our natural sentiments. Our just indignation against the folly and inhumanity of his conduct is exasperated by our sympathy

* Lata culpa prope dolum est.

PART II. with the unfortunate ſufferer. Nothing, however, would appear more ſhocking to our natural ſenſe of equity, than to bring a man to the ſcaffold merely for having thrown a ſtone careleſsly into the ſtreet without hurting any body. The folly and inhumanity of his conduct, however, would in this caſe be the ſame; but ſtill our ſentiments would be very different. The conſideration of this difference may ſatisfy us how much the indignation, even of the ſpectator, is apt to be animated by the actual conſequences of the action. In caſes of this kind there will, if I am not miſtaken, be found a great degree of ſeverity in the laws of almoſt all nations; as I have already obſerved that in thoſe of an oppoſite kind there was a very general relaxation of diſcipline.

There is another degree of negligence which does not involve in it any ſort of injuſtice. The perſon who is guilty of it treats his neighbour as he treats himſelf, means no harm to any body, and is far from entertaining any inſolent contempt for the ſafety and happineſs of others. He is not, however, ſo careful and circumſpect in his conduct as he ought to be, and deſerves upon this account ſome degree of blame and cenſure, but no ſort of puniſhment. Yet if, by a negligence* of this kind he ſhould occaſion ſome damage to another perſon, he is by the laws of, I believe, all countries, obliged to compenſate it. And though this is, no doubt, a real

* Culpa levis.

puniſhment,

punishment, d what no mortal would have thought of inflicting upon him, had it not been for the unlucky accident which his conduct gave occasion to; yet this decision of the law is approved of by the natural sentiments of all mankind. Nothing, we think, can be more just than that one man should not suffer by the carelessness of another; and that the damage occasioned by blamable negligence, should be made up by the person who was guilty of it.

SECT. III.

There is another species of negligence*, which consists merely in a want of the most anxious timidity and circumspection, with regard to all the possible consequences of our actions. The want of this painful attention, when no bad consequences follow from it, is so far from being regarded as blamable, that the contrary quality is rather considered as such. That timid circumspection which is afraid of every thing, is never regarded as a virtue, but as a quality which more than any other incapacitates for action and business. Yet when, from a want of this excessive care, a person happens to occasion some damage to another, he is often by the law obliged to compensate it. Thus, by the Aquilian law, the man, who not being able to manage a horse that had accidentally taken fright, should happen to ride down his neighbour's slave, is obliged to compensate the damage. When an accident of this kind happens, we are apt to think that he ought not to have

* Culpa levissima.

PART II. rode ſuch a horſe, and to regard his attempting it as an unpardonable levity; though without this accident we ſhould not only have made no ſuch reflection, but ſhould have regarded his refuſing it as the effect of timid weakneſs, and of an anxiety about merely poſſible events, which it is to no purpoſe to be aware of. The perſon himſelf, who by an accident even of this kind has involuntarily hurt another, ſeems to have ſome ſenſe of his own ill deſert, with regard to him. He naturally runs up to the ſufferer to expreſs his concern for what has happened, and to make every acknowledgment in his power. If he has any ſenſibility, he neceſſarily deſires to compenſate the damage, and to do every thing he can to appeaſe that animal reſentment which he is ſenſible will be apt to ariſe in the breaſt of the ſufferer. To make no apology, to offer no atonement, is regarded as the higheſt brutality. Yet why ſhould he make an apology more than any other perſon? Why ſhould he, ſince he was equally innocent with any other byeſtander, be thus ſingled out from among all mankind, to make up for the bad fortune of another? This taſk would ſurely never be impoſed upon him, did not even the impartial ſpectator feel ſome indulgence for what may be regarded as the unjuſt reſentment of that other.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

Of the final cause of this Irregularity of Sentiments.

SUCH is the effect of the good or bad consequence of actions upon the sentiments both of the person who performs them, and of others; and thus, Fortune, which governs the world, has some influence where we should be least willing to allow her any, and directs in some measure the sentiments of mankind, with regard to the character and conduct both of themselves and others. That the world judges by the event, and not by the design, has been in all ages the complaint, and is the great discouragement of virtue. Every body agrees to the general maxim, that as the event does not depend on the agent, it ought to have no influence upon our sentiments, with regard to the merit or propriety of his conduct. But when we come to particulars, we find that our sentiments are scarce in any one instance exactly conformable to what this equitable maxim would direct. The happy or unprosperous event of any action, is not only apt to give us a good or bad opinion of the prudence with which it was conducted, but almost always too animates our gratitude or

PART II. resentment, our sense of the merit or demerit of the design.

Nature, however, when she implanted the seeds of this irregularity in the human breast, seems, as upon all other occasions, to have intended the happiness and perfection of the species. If the hurtfulness of the design, if the malevolence of the affection, were alone the causes which excited our resentment, we should feel all the furies of that passion against any person in whose breast we suspected or believed such designs or affections were harboured, though they had never broke out into any actions. Sentiments, thoughts, intentions, would become the objects of punishment; and if the indignation of mankind run as high against them as against actions; if the baseness of the thought which had given birth to no action, seemed in the eyes of the world as much to call aloud for vengeance as the baseness of the action, every court of judicature would become a real inquisition. There would be no safety for the most innocent and circumspect conduct. Bad wishes, bad views, bad designs, might still be suspected; and while these excited the same indignation with bad conduct, while bad intentions were as much resented as bad actions, they would equally expose the person to punishment and resentment. Actions, therefore, which either produce actual evil, or attempt to produce it, and thereby put us in the immediate fear of it, are by the Author of nature

ture rendered the only proper and approved jects of human punishment and resentment. ntiments, designs, affections, though it is from ese that according to cool reason human actions rive their whole merit or demerit, are placed the great Judge of hearts beyond the limits every human jurisdiction, and are reserved for a cognizance of his own unerring tribunal. at necessary rule of justice, therefore, that en in this life are liable to punishment for their tions only, not for their designs and intentions, founded upon this salutary and useful irregu- ity in human sentiments concerning merit or merit, which at first sight appears so absurd d unaccountable. But every part of nature, en attentively surveyed, equally demonstrates providential care of its Author, and we may mire the wisdom and goodness of God even in e weakness and folly of men.

SECT. III.

Nor is that irregularity of sentiments alto- ther without its utility, by which the merit of unsuccessful attempt to serve, and much more t of mere good inclinations and kind wishes, pears to be imperfect. Man was made for tion, and to promote by the exertion of his culties such changes in the external circum- nces both of himself and others, as may seem ost favourable to the happiness of all. He ust not be satisfied with indolent benevolence, r fancy himself the friend of mankind, be- use in his heart he wishes well to the prospe- ty of the world. That he may call forth the hole vigour of his soul, and strain every nerve,

PART II. in order to produce thoſe ends which it is the purpoſe of his being to advance, Nature has taught him, that neither himſelf nor mankind can be fully ſatisfied with his conduct, nor beſtow upon it the full meaſure of applauſe, unleſs he has actually produced them. He is made to know, that the praiſe of good intentions, without the merit of good offices, will be but of little avail to excite either the loudeſt acclamations of the world, or even the higheſt degree of ſelf applauſe. The man who has performed no ſingle action of importance, but whoſe whole converſation and deportment expreſs the juſteſt, the nobleſt, and moſt generous ſentiments, can be entitled to demand no very high reward, even though his inutility ſhould be owing to nothing but the want of an opportunity to ſerve. We can ſtill refuſe it him without blame. We can ſtill aſk him, What have you done? What actual ſervice can you produce, to entitle you to ſo great a recompenſe? We eſteem you, and love you; but we owe you nothing. To reward indeed that latent virtue which has been uſeleſs only for want of an opportunity to ſerve, to beſtow upon it thoſe honours and preferments, which, though in ſome meaſure it may be ſaid to deſerve them, it could not with propriety have inſiſted upon, is the effect of the moſt divine benevolence. To puniſh, on the contrary, for the affections of the heart only, where no crime has been committed, is the moſt inſolent and barbarous tyranny. The benevolent affections ſeem to deſerve moſt praiſe, when they do

not wait till it becomes almoſt a crime for them not to exert themſelves. The malevolent, on the contrary, can ſcarce be too tardy, too ſlow, or deliberate.

It is even of conſiderable importance, that the evil which is done without deſign ſhould be regarded as a misfortune to the doer as well as to the ſufferer. Man is thereby taught to reverence the happineſs of his brethren, to tremble leſt he ſhould, even unknowingly, do any thing that can hurt them, and to dread that animal reſentment which, he feels, is ready to burſt out againſt him, if he ſhould, without deſign, be the unhappy inſtrument of their calamity. As, in the ancient heathen religion, that holy ground which had been conſecrated to ſome god, was not to be trod upon but upon ſolemn and neceſſary occaſions, and the man who had even ignorantly violated it, became piacular from that moment, and, until proper atonement ſhould be made, incurred the vengeance of that powerful and inviſible being to whom it had been ſet apart; ſo, by the wiſdom of Nature, the happineſs of every innocent man is, in the ſame manner, rendered holy, conſecrated, and hedged round againſt the approach of every other man; not to be wantonly trod upon, not even to be, in any reſpect, ignorantly and involuntarily violated, without requiring ſome expiation, ſome atonement in proportion to the greatneſs of ſuch undeſigned violation. A man of humanity, who accidentally, and without the ſmalleſt degree of blamable negligence, has been the cauſe of the

PART II. the death of another man, feels himſelf piacular, though not guilty. During his whole life he conſiders this accident as one of the greateſt misfortunes that could have befallen him. If the family of the ſlain is poor, and he himſelf in tolerable circumſtances, he immediately takes them under his protection, and, without any other merit, thinks them entitled to every degree of favour and kindneſs. If they are in better circumſtances, he endeavours by every ſubmiſſion, by every expreſſion of ſorrow, by rendering them every good office which he can deviſe or they accept of, to atone for what has happened, and to propitiate, as much as poſſible, their, perhaps natural, though no doubt moſt unjuſt reſentment, for the great, though involuntary, offence which he has given them.

The diſtreſs which an innocent perſon feels, who, by ſome accident, has been led to do ſomething which, if it had been done with knowledge and deſign, would have juſtly expoſed him to the deepeſt reproach, has given occaſion to ſome of the fineſt and moſt intereſting ſcenes both of the ancient and of the modern drama. It is this fallacious ſenſe of guilt, if I may call it ſo, which conſtitutes the whole diſtreſs of Oedipus and Jocaſta upon the Greek, of Monimia and Iſabella upon the Engliſh, theatre. They are all of them in the higheſt degree piacular, though not one of them is in the ſmalleſt degree guilty.

Notwithſtanding, however, all theſe ſeeming irregularities of ſentiment, if man ſhould unfortunately either give occaſion to thoſe evils which he

he did not intend, or fail in producing that good which he intended, Nature has not left his innocence altogether without consolation, nor his virtue altogether without reward. He then calls to his assistance that just and equitable maxim, That those events which did not depend upon our conduct, ought not to diminish the esteem that is due to us. He summons up his whole magnanimity and firmness of soul, and strives to regard himself, not in the light in which he at present appears, but in that in which he ought to appear, in which he would have appeared had his generous designs been crowned with success, and in which he would still appear, notwithstanding their miscarriage, if the sentiments of mankind were either altogether candid and equitable, or even perfectly consistent with themselves. The more candid and humane part of mankind entirely go along with the efforts which he thus makes to support himself in his own opinion. They exert their whole generosity and greatness of mind, to correct in themselves this irregularity of human nature, and endeavour to regard his unfortunate magnanimity in the same light in which, had it been successful, they would, without any such generous exertion, have naturally been disposed to consider it.

THE

THE

THEORY

OF

MORAL SENTIMENTS.

PART III.

Of the FOUNDATION of our JUDGMENTS concerning our own SENTIMENTS and CONDUCT, and of the SENSE of DUTY.

CHAP. I.

Of the Principle of Self-approbation and of Self-disapprobation.

PART III.

IN the two foregoing parts of this discourse, I have chiefly considered the origin and foundation of our judgments concerning the sentiments and conduct of others. I come now to consider more particularly the origin of those concerning our own.

The principle by which we naturally either approve or disapprove of our own conduct, seems to be altogether the same with that by which we exercise the like judgments concerning the conduct of other people. We either approve

approve or diſapprove of the conduct of another man according as we feel that, when we bring his caſe home to ourſelves, we either can or cannot entirely ſympathize with the ſentiments and motives which directed it. And, in the ſame manner, we either approve or diſapprove of our own conduct, according as we feel that, when we place ourſelves in the ſituation of another man, and view it, as it were, with his eyes and from his ſtation, we either can or cannot entirely enter into and ſympathize with the ſentiments and motives which influenced it. We can never ſurvey our own ſentiments and motives, we can never form any judgment concerning them; unleſs we remove ourſelves, as it were, from our own natural ſtation, and endeavour to view them as at a certain diſtance from us. But we can do this in no other way than by endeavouring to view them with the eyes of other people, or as other people are likely to view them. Whatever judgment we can form concerning them, accordingly, muſt always bear ſome ſecret reference, either to what are, or to what, upon a certain condition, would be, or to what, we imagine, ought to be the judgment of others. We endeavour to examine our own conduct as we imagine any other fair and impartial ſpectator would examine it. If, upon placing ourſelves in his ſituation, we thoroughly enter into all the paſſions and motives which influenced it, we approve of it, by ſympathy with the approbation of this ſuppoſed equitable

PART III.

equitable judge. If otherwiſe, we enter into his diſapprobation, and condemn it.

Were it poſſible that a human creature could grow up to manhood in ſome ſolitary place, without any communication with his own ſpecies, he could no more think of his own character, of the propriety or demerit of his own ſentiments and conduct, of the beauty or deformity of his own mind, than of the beauty or deformity of his own face. All theſe are objects which he cannot eaſily ſee, which naturally he does not look at, and with regard to which he is provided with no mirror which can preſent them to his view. Bring him into ſociety, and he is immediately provided with the mirror which he wanted before. It is placed in the countenance and behaviour of thoſe he lives with, which always mark when they enter into, and when they diſapprove of his ſentiments; and it is here that he firſt views the propriety and impropriety of his own paſſions, the beauty and deformity of his own mind. To a man who from his birth was a ſtranger to ſociety, the objects of his paſſions, the external bodies which either pleaſed or hurt him, would occupy his whole attention. The paſſions themſelves, the deſires or averſions, the joys or ſorrows, which those objects excited, though of all things the moſt immediately preſent to him, could ſcarce ever be the objects of his thoughts. The idea of them could never intereſt him ſo much as to call upon his attentive conſideration. The conſidera-

tion of his joy could in him excite no new joy, nor that of his ſorrow any new ſorrow, though the conſideration of the cauſes of thoſe paſſions might often excite both. Bring him into ſociety, and all his own paſſions will immediately become the cauſes of new paſſions. He will obſerve that mankind approve of ſome of them, and are diſguſted by others. He will be elevated in the one caſe, and caſt down in the other; his deſires and averſions, his joys and ſorrows, will now often become the cauſes of new deſires and new averſions, new joys and new ſorrows: they will now, therefore, intereſt him deeply, and often call upon his moſt attentive conſideration.

Our firſt ideas of perſonal beauty and deformity, are drawn from the ſhape and appearance of others, not from our own. We ſoon become ſenſible, however, that others exerciſe the ſame criticiſm upon us. We are pleaſed when they approve of our figure, and are diſobliged when they ſeem to be diſguſted. We become anxious to know how far our appearance deſerves either their blame or approbation. We examine our perſons limb by limb, and by placing ourſelves before a looking-glaſs, or by ſome ſuch expedient, endeavour as much as poſſible, to view ourſelves at the diſtance and with the eyes of other people. If, after this examination, we are ſatisfied with our own appearance, we can more eaſily ſupport the moſt diſadvantageous judgments of others. If, on the contrary, we are ſenſible that we are the natural objects of diſtaſte, every appearance of their diſapprobation mortifies us beyond

PART III. beyond all meaſure. A man who is tolerably handſome, will allow you to laugh at any little irregularity in his perſon; but all ſuch jokes are commonly unſupportable to one who is really deformed. It is evident, however, that we are anxious about our own beauty and deformity, only upon account of its effect upon others. If we had no connexion with ſociety, we ſhould be altogether indifferent about either.

In the ſame manner our firſt moral criticiſms are exerciſed upon the characters and conduct of other people; and we are all very forward to obſerve how each of theſe affects us. But we ſoon learn, that other people are equally frank with regard to our own. We become anxious to know how far we deſerve their cenſure or applauſe, and whether to them we muſt neceſſarily appear thoſe agreeable or diſagreeable creatures which they repreſent us. We begin, upon this account, to examine our own paſſions and conduct, and to conſider how theſe muſt appear to them, by conſidering how they would appear to us if in their ſituation. We ſuppoſe ourſelves the ſpectators of our own behaviour, and endeavour to imagine what effect it would, in this light, produce upon us. This is the only looking-glaſs by which we can, in ſome meaſure, with the eyes of other people, ſcrutinize the propriety of our own conduct. If in this view it pleaſes us, we are tolerably ſatisfied. We can be more indifferent about the applauſe, and, in ſome meaſure, deſpiſe the cenſure of the world; ſecure that, however miſun-

derſtood or miſrepreſented, we are the natural and proper objects of approbation. On the contrary, if we are doubtful about it, we are often, upon that very account, more anxious to gain their approbation, and, provided we have not already, as they ſay, ſhaken hands with infamy, we are altogether diſtracted at the thoughts of their cenſure, which then ſtrikes us with double ſeverity.

When I endeavour to examine my own conduct, when I endeavour to paſs ſentence upon it, and either to approve or condemn it, it is evident that, in all ſuch caſes, I divide myſelf, as it were, into two perſons; and that I, the examiner and judge, repreſent a different character from that other I, the perſon whoſe conduct is examined into and judged of. The firſt is the ſpectator, whoſe ſentiments with regard to my own conduct I endeavour to enter into, by placing myſelf in his ſituation, and by conſidering how it would appear to me, when ſeen from that particular point of view. The ſecond is the agent, the perſon whom I properly call myſelf, and of whoſe conduct, under the character of a ſpectator, I was endeavouring to form ſome opinion. The firſt is the judge; the ſecond the perſon judged of. But that the judge ſhould, in every reſpect, be the ſame with the perſon judged of, is as impoſſible, as that the cauſe ſhould, in every reſpect, be the ſame with the effect.

To be amiable and to be meritorious; that is, to deſerve love and to deſerve reward, are the

PART III. great characters of virtue; and to be odious and punishable, of vice. But all these characters have an immediate reference to the sentiments of others. Virtue is not said to be amiable, or to be meritorious, because it is the object of its own love, or of its own gratitude; but because it excites those sentiments in other men. The consciousness that it is the object of such favourable regards, is the source of that inward tranquillity and self-satisfaction with which it is naturally attended, as the suspicion of the contrary gives occasion to the torments of vice. What so great happiness as to be beloved, and to know that we deserve to be beloved? What so great misery as to be hated, and to know that we deserve to be hated?

CHAP. II.

Of the love of Praise, and of that of Praise-worthiness; and of the dread of Blame, and of that of Blame-worthiness.

MAN naturally desires, not only to be loved, but to be lovely; or to be that thing which is the natural and proper object of love. He naturally dreads, not only to be hated, but to be hateful; or to be that thing which is the natural and proper object of hatred. He desires, not only praise, but praise-worthiness; or to

› be that thing which, though it ſhould be raiſed by nobody, is, however, the natural and roper object of praiſe. He dreads, not only lame, but blame-worthineſs; or to be that ing which, though it ſhould be blamed by obody, is, however, the natural and proper bject of blame.

The love of praiſe-worthineſs is by no means erived altogether from the love of praiſe. hoſe two principles, though they reſemble one nother, though they are connected, and often lended with one another, are yet, in many eſpects, diſtinct and independent of one nother.

The love and admiration which we naturally onceive for thoſe whoſe character and conduct e approve of, neceſſarily diſpoſe us to deſire to ecome ourſelves the objects of the like agreeble ſentiments, and to be as amiable and as dmirable as thoſe whom we love and admire he moſt. Emulation, the anxious deſire that e ourſelves ſhould excel, is originally founded n our admiration of the excellence of others. Neither can we be ſatisfied with being merely dmired for what other people are admired. We muſt at leaſt believe ourſelves to be admirale for what they are admirable. But, in order attain this ſatisfaction, we muſt become the npartial ſpectators of our own character and onduct. We muſt endeavour to view them ith the eyes of other people, or as other people re likely to view them. When ſeen in this ght, if they appear to us as we wiſh, we are

PART III. happy and contented. But it greatly confirms this happineſs and contentment when we find that other people, viewing them with thoſe very eyes with which we, in imagination only, were endeavouring to view them, ſee them preciſely in the ſame light in which we ourſelves had ſeen them. Their approbation neceſſarily confirms our own ſelf-approbation. Their praiſe neceſſarily ſtrengthens our own ſenſe of our own praiſe-worthineſs. In this caſe, ſo far is the love of praiſe-worthineſs from being derived altogether from that of praiſe; that the love of praiſe ſeems, at leaſt in a great meaſure, to be derived from that of praiſe-worthineſs.

The moſt ſincere praiſe can give little pleaſure when it cannot be conſidered as ſome ſort of proof of praiſe-worthineſs. It is by no means ſufficient that, from ignorance or miſtake, eſteem and admiration ſhould, in ſome way or other, be beſtowed upon us. If we are conſcious that we do not deſerve to be ſo favourably thought of, and that if the truth were known, we ſhould be regarded with very different ſentiments, our ſatisfaction is far from being complete. The man who applauds us either for actions which we did not perform, or for motives which had no ſort of influence upon our conduct, applauds not us, but another perſon. We can derive no [illegible] of ſatisfaction from his praiſes. To us [illegible] y [illegible] d be more mortifying than any c [illegible] ld perpetually call to our min[illegible] t [illegible] ling of all reflections, the reflec[illegible] ought to be, but what we

e are not. A woman who paints, could
erive, one ſhould imagine, but little vanity from
e compliments that are paid to her complexion.
heſe, we ſhould expect, ought rather to put
r in mind of the ſentiments which her real
mplexion would excite, and mortify her
e more by the contraſt. To be pleaſed with
ch groundleſs applauſe is a proof of the moſt
perficial levity and weakneſs. It is what is
operly called vanity, and is the foundation of
e moſt ridiculous and contemptible vices, the
ces of affectation and common lying; follies
hich, if experience did not teach us how com-
on they are, one ſhould imagine the leaſt
ark of common ſenſe would ſave us from.
he fooliſh liar, who endeavours to excite the
miration of the company by the relation of
ventures which never had any exiſtence; the
portant coxcomb, who gives himſelf airs of
nk and diſtinction which he well knows he
s no juſt pretenſions to; are both of them, no
ubt, pleaſed with the applauſe which they
ncy they meet with. But their vanity ariſes
om ſo groſs an illuſion of the imagination,
at it is difficult to conceive how any rational
eature ſhould be impoſed upon by it. When
ey place themſelves in the ſituation of thoſe
om they fancy they have deceived, they are
uck with the higheſt admiration for their
n perſons. They look upon themſelves, not
that light in which, they know, they ought to
pear to their companions, but in that in which
ey believe their companions actually look

PART III.

upon them. Their ſuperficial weakneſs and trivial folly hinder them from ever turning their eyes inwards, or from ſeeing themſelves in that deſpicable point of view in which their own conſciences muſt tell them that they would appear to every body, if the real truth ſhould ever come to be known.

As ignorant and groundleſs praiſe can give no ſolid joy, no ſatisfaction that will bear any ſerious examination, ſo, on the contrary, it often gives real comfort to reflect, that though no praiſe ſhould actually be beſtowed upon us, our conduct, however, has been ſuch as to deſerve it, and has been in every reſpect ſuitable to thoſe meaſures and rules by which praiſe and approbation are naturally and commonly beſtowed. We are pleaſed, not only with praiſe, but with having done what is praiſe-worthy. We are pleaſed to think that we have rendered ourſelves the natural objects of approbation, though no approbation ſhould ever actually be beſtowed upon us: and we are mortified to reflect that we have juſtly merited the blame of thoſe we live with, though that ſentiment ſhould never actually be exerted againſt us. The man who is conſcious to himſelf that he has exactly obſerved thoſe meaſures of conduct which experience informs him are generally agreeable, reflects with ſatisfaction on the propriety of his own behaviour. When he views it in the light in which the impartial ſpectator would view it, he thoroughly enters into all the motives which influenced it. He looks back upon every part of

of it with pleasure and approbation, and though mankind should never be acquainted with what he has done, he regards himself, not so much according to the light in which they actually regard him, as according to that in which they would regard him if they were better informed. He anticipates the applause and admiration which in this case would be bestowed upon him, and he applauds and admires himself by sympathy with sentiments, which do not indeed actually take place, but which the ignorance of the public alone hinders from taking place, which he knows are the natural and ordinary effects of such conduct, which his imagination strongly connects with it, and which he has acquired a habit of conceiving as something that naturally and in propriety ought to follow from it. Men have voluntarily thrown away life to acquire after death a renown which they could no longer enjoy. Their imagination, in the mean time, anticipated that fame which was in future times to be bestowed upon them. Those applauses which they were never to hear rung in their ears; the thoughts of that admiration, whose effects they were never to feel, played about their hearts, banished from their breasts the strongest of all natural fears, and transported them to perform actions which seem almost beyond the reach of human nature. But in point of reality there is surely no great difference between that approbation which is not to be bestowed till we can no longer enjoy it, and that which, indeed, is never to be bestowed, but

PART III. which would be beſtowed, if the world was ever made to underſtand properly the real circumſtances of our behaviour. If the one often produces ſuch violent effects, we cannot wonder that the other ſhould always be highly regarded.

Nature, when ſhe formed man for ſociety, endowed him with an original deſire to pleaſe, and an original averſion to offend his brethren. She taught him to feel pleaſure in their favourable, and pain in their unfavourable regard. She rendered their approbation moſt flattering and moſt agreeable to him for its own ſake; and their diſapprobation moſt mortifying and moſt offenſive.

But this deſire of the approbation, and this averſion to the diſapprobation of his brethren, would not alone have rendered him fit for that ſociety for which he was made. Nature, accordingly, has endowed him, not only with a deſire of being approved of, but with a deſire of being what ought to be approved of; or of being what he himſelf approves of in other men. The firſt deſire could only have made him wiſh to appear to be fit for ſociety. The ſecond was neceſſary in order to render him anxious to be really fit. The firſt could only have prompted him to the affectation of virtue, and to the concealment of vice. The ſecond was neceſſary in order to inſpire him with the real love of virtue, and with the real abhorrence of vice. In every well-formed mind this ſecond deſire ſeems to be the ſtrongeſt of the two. It

s only the weakeſt and moſt ſuperficial of mankind who can be much delighted with that praiſe which they themſelves know to be altogether unmerited. A weak man may ſometimes be pleaſed with it, but a wiſe man rejects it upon all occaſions. But, though a wiſe man feels little pleaſure from praiſe where he knows there is no praiſe-worthineſs, he often feels the higheſt in doing what he knows to be praiſeworthy, though he knows equally well that no praiſe is ever to be beſtowed upon it. To obtain the approbation of mankind, where no approbation is due, can never be an object of any importance to him. To obtain that approbation where it is really due, may ſometimes be an object of no great importance to him. But to be that thing which deſerves approbation, muſt always be an object of the higheſt.

To deſire, or even to accept of praiſe, where no praiſe is due, can be the effect only of the moſt contemptible vanity. To deſire it where it is really due, is to deſire no more than that a moſt eſſential act of juſtice ſhould be done to us. The love of juſt fame, of true glory, even for its own ſake, and independent of any advantage which he can derive from it, is not unworthy even of a wiſe man. He ſometimes, however, neglects, and even deſpiſes it; and he is never more apt to do ſo than when he has the moſt perfect aſſurance of the perfect propriety of every part of his own conduct. His ſelf-approbation, in this caſe, ſtands in need of no confirmation from the approbation of other men. It is

PART III. is alone ſufficient, and he is contented v
This ſelf-approbation, if not the only, is a
the principal object, about which he can or
to be anxious. The love of it, is the l
virtue.

As the love and admiration which we nat
conceive for ſome characters, diſpoſe us t
to become ourſelves the proper objects o
agreeable ſentiments; ſo the hatred and
tempt which we as naturally conceive for o
diſpoſe us, perhaps ſtill more ſtrongly, to
the very thought of reſembling them in
reſpect. Neither is it, in this caſe, too, ſo
the thought of being hated and deſpiſed th
are afraid of, as that of being hateful and
cable. We dread the thought of doing any
which can render us the juſt and proper ob
of the hatred and contempt of our fellow-
tures; even though we had the moſt pe
ſecurity that thoſe ſentiments were n
actually to be exerted againſt us. The
who has broke through all thoſe meaſur
conduct, which can alone render him agre
to mankind, though he ſhould have the
perfect aſſurance that what he had done wa
ever to be concealed from every human eye,
all to no purpoſe. When he looks back up
and views it in the light in which the impa
ſpectator would view it, he finds that he
enter into none of the motives which influe
it. He is abaſhed and confounded at
thoughts of it, and neceſſarily feels a very l
degree of that ſhame which he would be exp

to, if his actions ſhould ever come to be generally known. His imagination, in this caſe too, anticipates the contempt and deriſion from which nothing ſaves him but the ignorance of thoſe he lives with. He ſtill feels that he is the natural object of theſe ſentiments, and ſtill trembles at the thought of what he would ſuffer, if they were ever actually exerted againſt him. But if what he had been guilty of was not merely one of thoſe improprieties which are the objects of ſimple diſapprobation, but one of thoſe enormous crimes which excite deteſtation and reſentment, he could never think of it, as long as he had any ſenſibility left, without feeling all the agony of horror and remorſe; and though he could be aſſured that no man was ever to know it, and could even bring himſelf to believe that there was no God to revenge it, he would ſtill feel enough of both theſe ſentiments to embitter the whole of his life: he would ſtill regard himſelf as the natural object of the hatred and indignation of all his fellow-creatures; and, if his heart was not grown callous by the habit of crimes, he could not think without terror and aſtoniſhment even of the manner in which mankind would look upon him, of what would be the expreſſion of their countenance and of their eyes, if the dreadful truth ſhould ever come to be known. Theſe natural pangs of an affrighted conſcience are the dæmons, the avenging furies, which, in this life, haunt the guilty, which allow them neither quiet nor repoſe, which often drive them to deſpair and diſtraction, from which

PART III.

no aſſurance of ſecrecy can protect them, from which no principles of irreligion can entirely deliver them, and from which nothing can free them but the vileſt and moſt abject of all ſtates, a complete inſenſibility to honour and infamy, to vice and virtue. Men of the moſt deteſtable characters, who, in the execution of the moſt dreadful crimes, had taken their meaſures ſo coolly as to avoid even the ſuſpicion of guilt, have ſometimes been driven, by the horror of their ſituation, to diſcover, of their own accord, what no human ſagacity could ever have inveſtigated. By acknowledging their guilt, by ſubmitting themſelves to the reſentment of their offended fellow-citizens, and, by thus ſatiating that vengeance of which they were ſenſible that they had become the proper objects, they hoped, by their death to reconcile themſelves, at leaſt in their own imagination, to the natural ſentiments of mankind; to be able to conſider themſelves as leſs worthy of hatred and reſentment; to atone, in ſome meaſure, for their crimes, and, by thus becoming the objects, rather of compaſſion than of horror, if poſſible, to die in peace and with the forgiveneſs of all their fellow-creatures. Compared to what they felt before the diſcovery, even the thought of this, it ſeems, was happineſs.

In ſuch caſes, the horror of blame-worthineſs ſeems, even in perſons who cannot be ſuſpected of any extraordinary delicacy or ſenſibility of character, completely to conquer the dread of blame. In order to allay that horror, in order to pacify,

ſy, in ſome degree, the remorſe of their own ciences, they voluntarily ſubmitted them- s both to the reproach and to the puniſh- t which they knew were due to their es, but which, at the ſame time, they might y have avoided.

hey are the moſt frivolous and ſuperficial of kind only who can be much delighted with praiſe which they themſelves know to be gether unmerited. Unmerited reproach, ever, is frequently capable of mortifying ſeverely even men of more than ordinary ſtancy. Men of the moſt ordinary conſtancy, ed, eaſily learn to deſpiſe thoſe fooliſh tales ch are ſo frequently circulated in ſociety, which, from their own abſurdity and falſe- d, never fail to die away in the courſe of a weeks, or of a few days. But an innocent , though of more than ordinary conſtancy, ſten, not only ſhocked, but moſt ſeverely tified by the ſerious, though falſe, imputa- of a crime; eſpecially when that imputa- n happens unfortunately to be ſupported by e circumſtances which give it an air of pro- ility. He is humbled to find that any body ld think ſo meanly of his character as to poſe him capable of being guilty of it. ough perfectly conſcious of his own inno- ce, the very imputation ſeems often, even in own imagination, to throw a ſhadow of diſ- ce and diſhonour upon his character. His indignation, too, at ſo very groſs an injury, ich, however, it may frequently be improper,

PART III.

and ſometimes even impoſſible to reveng itſelf a very painful ſenſation. There i greater tormentor of the human breaſt violent reſentment which cannot be grati An innocent man, brought to the ſcaffold by falſe imputation of an infamous or odious cr ſuffers the moſt cruel misfortune which i poſſible for innocence to ſuffer. The agor his mind may, in this caſe, frequently be gre than that of thoſe who ſuffer for the like cri of which they have been actually guilty. fligate criminals, ſuch as common thieves highwaymen, have frequently little ſenſe of baſeneſs of their own conduct, and conſeque no remorſe. Without troubling themſe about the juſtice or injuſtice of the puniſhm they have always been accuſtomed to look a the gibbet as a lot very likely to fall to th When it does fall to them, therefore, they ſider themſelves only as not quite ſo lucky ſome of their companions, and ſubmit to t fortune, without any other uneaſineſs than may ariſe from the fear of death; a fear wh even by ſuch worthleſs wretches, we freque ſee, can be ſo eaſily, and ſo very completely quered. The innocent man, on the contr over and above the uneaſineſs which this may occaſion, is tormented by his own indi tion at the injuſtice which has been don him. He is ſtruck with horror at the thou of the infamy which the puniſhment may upon his memory, and foreſees, with the exquiſite anguiſh, that he is hereafter to

rem

membered by his dearest friends and relations, not with regret and affection, but with shame, and even with horror for his supposed disgraceful conduct: and the shades of death appear to close round him with a darker and more melancholy gloom than naturally belongs to them. Such fatal accidents, for the tranquillity of mankind, it is to be hoped, happen very rarely in any country; but they happen sometimes in all countries, even in those where justice is in general very well administered. The unfortunate Calas, a man of much more than ordinary constancy (broke upon the wheel and burnt at Tholouse for the supposed murder of his own son, of which he was perfectly innocent), seemed, with his last breath, to deprecate, not so much the cruelty of the punishment, as the disgrace which the imputation might bring upon his memory. After he had been broke, and was just going to be thrown into the fire, the monk, who attended the execution, exhorted him to confess the crime for which he had been condemned. My Father, said Calas, can you yourself bring yourself to believe that I am guilty?

To persons in such unfortunate circumstances, that humble philosophy which confines its views to this life, can afford, perhaps, but little consolation. Every thing that could render either life or death respectable is taken from them. They are condemned to death and to everlasting infamy. Religion can alone afford them any effectual comfort. She alone can tell them that

PART III.

that it is of little importance what man think of their conduct, while the all-ſeeing of the world approves of it. She alone ca ſent to them the view of another world; a of more candour, humanity, and juſtice, the preſent; where their innocence is i time to be declared, and their virtue to be f rewarded: and the ſame great principle can alone ſtrike terror into triumphant affords the only effectual conſolation to diſg and inſulted innocence.

In ſmaller offences, as well as in gr crimes, it frequently happens that a perſ ſenſibility is much more hurt by the u imputation, than the real criminal is by actual guilt. A woman of gallantry laughs at the well-founded ſurmiſes which ar culated concerning her conduct. The founded ſurmiſe of the ſame kind is a m ſtab to an innocent virgin. The perſon is deliberately guilty of a diſgraceful actio may lay it down, I believe, as a general can ſeldom have much ſenſe of the diſgr and the perſon who is habitually guilty can ſcarce ever have any.

When every man, even of middling u ſtanding, ſo readily deſpiſes unmerited appl how it comes to paſs that unmerited rep ſhould often be capable of mortifying ſo ſev men of the ſoundeſt and beſt judgment, perhaps, deſerve ſome conſideration.

Pain, I have already had occaſion to obſ is, in almoſt all caſes, a more pungent ſen

than the (ɔfite and correſpondent pleaſure. The one, almoſt always, depreſſes us much more below the ordinary, or what may be called the natural ſtate of our happineſs, than the other ever raiſes us above it. A man of ſenſibility is apt to be more humiliated by juſt cenſure than he is ever elevated by juſt applauſe. Unmerited applauſe a wiſe man rejects with contempt upon all occaſions; but he often feels very ſeverely the injuſtice of unmerited cenſure. By ſuffering himſelf to be applauded for what he has not performed, by aſſuming a merit which does not belong to him, he feels that he is guilty of a mean falſehood, and deſerves, not the admiration, but the contempt of thoſe very perſons who, by miſtake, had been led to admire him. It may, perhaps, give him ſome well-founded pleaſure to find that he has been, by many people, thought capable of performing what he did not perform. But, though he may be obliged to his friends for their good opinion, he would think himſelf guilty of the greateſt baſeneſs if he did not immediately undeceive them. It gives him little pleaſure to look upon himſelf in the light in which other people actually look upon him, when he is conſcious that, if they knew the truth, they would look upon him in a very different light. A weak man, however, is often much delighted with viewing himſelf in this falſe and deluſive light. He aſſumes the merit of every laudable action that is aſcribed to him, and pretends to that of many which nobody ever thought of aſcribing to him. He pretends to

 have

PART III.

have done what he never did, to have writt what another wrote, to have invented what other discovered; and is led into all the mise ble vices of plagiarism and common lying. I though no man of middling good sense can rive much pleasure from the imputation o laudable action which he never performed, a wise man may suffer great pain from the s ous imputation of a crime which he never co mitted. Nature, in this case, has rendered pain, not only more pungent than the oppo and correspondent pleasure, but she has rende it so in a much greater than the ordinary degr A denial rids a man at once of the foolish a ridiculous pleasure; but it will not always him of the pain. When he refuses the me which is ascribed to him, nobody doubts veracity. It may be doubted when he den the crime which he is accused of. He is once enraged at the falsehood of the impu tion, and mortified to find that any credit sho be given to it. He feels that his character not sufficient to protect him. He feels that brethren, far from looking upon him in t light in which he anxiously desires to be view by them, think him capable of being guilty what he is accused of. He knows perfectly t he has not been guilty. He knows perfec what he has done; but, perhaps, scarce any m can know perfectly what he himself is capable doing. What the peculiar constitution of his o mind may or may not admit of, is, perhaps, m or less a matter of doubt to every man. The tr

a

and good opinion of his friends and neighbours, tends more than any thing to relieve him from this moſt diſagreeable doubt; their diſtruſt and unfavourable opinion to increaſe it. He may think himſelf very confident that their unfavourable judgment is wrong: but this confidence can ſeldom be ſo great as to hinder that judgment from making ſome impreſſion upon him; and the greater his ſenſibility, the greater his delicacy, the greater his worth in ſhort, this impreſſion is likely to be the greater.

The agreement or diſagreement both of the ſentiments and judgments of other people with our own, is, in all caſes, it muſt be obſerved, of more or leſs importance to us, exactly in proportion as we ourſelves are more or leſs uncertain about the propriety of our own ſentiments, about the accuracy of our own judgments.

A man of ſenſibility may ſometimes feel great uneaſineſs leſt he ſhould have yielded too much even to what may be called an honourable paſſion; to his juſt indignation, perhaps, at the injury which may have been done either to himſelf or to his friend. He is anxiouſly afraid leſt, meaning only to act with ſpirit, and to do juſtice, he may, from the too great vehemence of his emotion, have done a real injury to ſome other perſon; who, though not innocent, may not have been altogether ſo guilty as he at firſt apprehended. The opinion of other people becomes, in this caſe, of the utmoſt importance to him. Their approbation is the moſt healing balſam; their diſapprobation, the bitterest and

PART III.

moſt tormenting poiſon that can be poured his uneaſy mind. When he is perfectly ſati with every part of his own conduct, the j ment of other people is often of leſs import to him.

There are ſome very noble and beau arts, in which the degree of excellence ca determined only by a certain nicety of taſt which the deciſions, however, appear alw in ſome meaſure, uncertain. There are ot in which the ſucceſs admits, either of demonſtration, or very ſatisfactory p Among the candidates for excellence in different arts, the anxiety about the p opinion is always much greater in the fo than in the latter.

The beauty of poetry is a matter of nicety, that a young beginner can ſcarce be certain that he has attained it. Not delights him ſo much, therefore, as the fav able judgments of his friends and of the lic; and nothing mortifies him ſo ſevere the contrary. The one eſtabliſhes, the c ſhakes, the good opinion which he is anx to entertain concerning his own performa Experience and ſucceſs may in time give a little more confidence in his own judgm He is at all times, however, liable to be ſeverely mortified by the unfavourable j ments of the public. Racine was ſo diſgu by the indifferent ſucceſs of his Phædra, fineſt tragedy, perhaps, that is extant in language, that, though in the vigour of his

and at the height of his abilities, he resolved to write no more for the stage. That great poet used frequently to tell his son, that the most paltry and impertinent criticism had always given him more pain, than the highest and justest eulogy had ever given him pleasure. The extreme sensibility of Voltaire to the slightest censure of the same kind is well known to every body. The Dunciad of Mr. Pope is an everlasting monument of how much the most correct, as well as the most elegant and harmonious of all the English poets, had been hurt by the criticisms of the lowest and most contemptible authors. Gray, (who joins to the sublimity of Milton the elegance and harmony of Pope, and to whom nothing is wanting to render him, perhaps, the first poet in the English language, but to have written a little more) is said to have been so much hurt, by a foolish and impertinent parody of two of his finest odes, that he never afterwards attempted any considerable work. Those men of letters who value themselves upon what is called fine writing in prose, approach somewhat to the sensibility of poets.

Mathematicians, on the contrary, who may have the most perfect assurance, both of the truth and of the importance of their discoveries, are frequently very indifferent about the reception which they may meet with from the public. The two greatest mathematicians that I ever had the honour to be known to, and, I

 believe,

PART III.

believe, the two greateſt that have lived in my time, Dr. Robert Simpſon of Glaſgow, and Dr. Matthew Stewart of Edinburgh, never ſeemed to feel even the ſlighteſt uneaſineſs from the neglect with which the ignorance of the public received ſome of their moſt valuable works. The great work of Sir Iſaac Newton, *his Mathematical Principles of Natural Philoſophy*, I have been told, was for ſeveral years neglected by the public. The tranquillity of that great man, it is probable, never ſuffered upon that account, the interruption of a ſingle quarter of an hour. Natural philoſophers, in their independency upon the public opinion approach nearly to mathematicians, and, in their judgments concerning the merit of their own diſcoveries and obſervations, enjoy ſome degree of the ſame ſecurity and tranquillity.

The morals of thoſe different claſſes of men of letters are, perhaps, ſometimes ſomewhat affected by this very great difference in their ſituation with regard to the public.

Mathematicians and natural philoſophers from their independency upon the public opinion, have little temptation to form themſelves into factions and cabals, either for the ſupport of their own reputation, or for the depreſſion of that of their rivals. They are almoſt always men of the moſt amiable ſimplicity of manners who live in good harmony with one another, as the friends of one another's reputation, enter into no intrigue in order to ſecure the public applauſe

applauſe, but are pleaſed when their works are approved of, without being either much vexed or very angry when they are neglected. CHAP. II.

It is not always the ſame caſe with poets, or with thoſe who value themſelves upon what is called fine writing. They are very apt to divide themſelves into a ſort of literary faction; each cabal being often avowedly, and almoſt always ſecretly, the mortal enemy of the reputation of every other, and employing all the mean arts of intrigue and ſolicitation to pre-occupy the public opinion in favour of the works of its own members, and againſt thoſe of its enemies and rivals. In France, Deſpreaux and Racine did not think it below them to ſet themſelves at the head of a literary cabal, in order to depreſs the reputation, firſt of Quinault and Perreault, and afterwards of Fontenelle and La Motte, and even to treat the good La Fontaine with a ſpecies of moſt diſreſpectful kindneſs. In England, the amiable Mr. Addiſon did not think it unworthy of his gentle and modeſt character to ſet himſelf at the head of a little cabal of the ſame kind, in order to keep down the riſing reputation of Mr. Pope. Mr. Fontenelle, in writing the lives and characters of the members of the academy of ſciences, a ſociety of mathematicians and natural philoſophers, has frequent opportunities of celebrating the amiable ſimplicity of their manners; a quality which, he obſerves, was ſo univerſal among them as to be characteriſtical, rather of that whole claſs of men of letters, than of any individual. Mr.

PART III.

D'Alembert, in writing the lives and characters of the members of the French academy, a ſociety of poets and fine writers, or of thoſe who are ſuppoſed to be ſuch, ſeems not to have had ſuch frequent opportunities of making any remark of this kind, and no where pretends to repreſent this amiable quality as characteriſtical of that claſs of men of letters whom he celebrates.

Our uncertainty concerning our own merit and our anxiety to think favourably of it, ſhould together naturally enough make us deſirous to know the opinion of other people concerning it; to be more than ordinarily elevated when that opinion is favourable, and to be more than ordinarily mortified when it is otherwiſe: but they ſhould not make us deſirous either of obtaining the favourable, or of avoiding the unfavourable opinion, by intrigue and cabal. When a man has bribed all the judges, the most unanimous deciſion of the court, though it may gain him his law-ſuit, cannot give him any aſſurance that he was in the right: and had he carried on his law-ſuit merely to ſatisfy himſelf that he was in the right, he never would have bribed the judges. But though he wiſhed to find himſelf in the right, he wiſhed likewiſe to gain his law-ſuit; and therefore he bribed the judges. If praiſe were of no conſequence to us, but as a proof of our own praiſe-worthineſs, we never ſhould endeavour to obtain it by unfair means. But, though to wiſe men it is, at least in doubtful caſes, of principal conſequence upon this account; it is likewiſe of ſome conſequence upon

upon its own account: and therefore (we cannot, indeed, upon ſuch occaſions, call them wiſe men, but) men very much above the common level have ſometimes attempted both to obtain praiſe, and to avoid blame, by very unfair means. CHAP. II.

Praiſe and blame expreſs what actually are; praiſe-worthineſs and blame-worthineſs, what naturally ought to be the ſentiments of other people with regard to our character and conduct. The love of praiſe is the deſire of obtaining the favourable ſentiments of our brethren. The love of praiſe-worthineſs is the deſire of rendering ourſelves the proper objects of thoſe ſentiments. So far thoſe two principles reſemble and are akin to one another. The like affinity and reſemblance take place between the dread of blame and that of blame-worthineſs.

The man who deſires to do, or who actually does, a praiſe-worthy action, may likewiſe deſire the praiſe which is due to it, and ſometimes, perhaps, more than is due to it. The two principles are in this caſe blended together. How far his conduct may have been influenced by the one, and how far by the other, may frequently be unknown even to himſelf. It muſt almoſt always be ſo to other people. They who are diſpoſed to leſſen the merit of his conduct, impute it chiefly or altogether to the mere love of praiſe, or to what they call mere vanity. They who are diſpoſed to think more favourably of it, impute it chiefly or altogether to the love of praiſe-worthineſs; to the love of what is really honour-

PART III. honourable and noble in human c nduct; to the defire, not merely of obtaining, but of deferving the approbation and applaufe of his brethren. The imagination of the fpectator throws upon it either the one colour or the other, according either to his habits of thinking, or to the favour or diflike which he may bear to the perfon whofe conduct he is confidering.

Some fplenetic philofophers, in judging of human nature, have done as peevifh individuals are apt to do in judging of the conduct of one another, and have imputed to the love of praife, or to what they call vanity, every action which ought to be afcribed to that of praife-worthinefs. I fhall hereafter have occafion to give an account of fome of their fyftems, and fhall not at prefent ftop to examine them.

Very few men can be fatisfied with their own private confciousnefs that they have attained thofe qualities, or performed thofe actions, which they admire and think praife-worthy in other people; unlefs it is, at the fame time, generally acknowledged that they poffefs the one, or have performed the other; or, in other words, unlefs they have actually obtained that praife which they think due both to the one and to the other. In this refpect, however, men differ confiderably from one another. Some feem indifferent about the praife, when, in their own minds, they are perfectly fatisfied that they have attained the praife-worthinefs. Others appear much lefs anxious about the praife-worthinefs than about the praife.

No

No man can be completely, or even tolerably satisfied, with having avoided every thing blame-worthy in his conduct, unless he has likewise avoided the blame or the reproach. A wise man may frequently neglect praise, even when he has best deserved it; but, in all matters of serious consequence, he will most carefully endeavour so to regulate his conduct as to avoid, not only blame-worthiness, but, as much as possible, every probable imputation of blame. He will never, indeed, avoid blame by doing any thing which he judges blame-worthy; by omitting any part of his duty, or by neglecting any opportunity of doing any thing which he judges to be really and greatly praise-worthy. But, with these modifications, he will most anxiously and carefully avoid it. To show much anxiety about praise, even for praise-worthy actions, is seldom a mark of great wisdom, but generally of some degree of weakness. But, in being anxious to avoid the shadow of blame or reproach, there may be no weakness, but frequently the most praise-worthy prudence.

"Many people," says Cicero, "despise glory, "who are yet most severely mortified by unjust "reproach; and that most inconsistently." This inconsistency, however, seems to be founded in the unalterable principles of human nature.

The all-wise Author of Nature has, in this manner, taught man to respect the sentiments and judgments of his brethren; to be more or less pleased when they approve of his conduct, and to be more or less hurt when they disapprove of

PART III. of it. He has made man, if I may ſay ſo, the immediate judge of mankind; and has, in this reſpect, as in many others, created him after his own image, and appointed him his vice-gerent upon earth, to ſuperintend the behaviour of his brethren. They are taught by nature, to acknowledge that power and juriſdiction which has thus been conferred upon him, to be more or leſs humbled and mortified when they have incurred his cenſure, and to be more or leſs elated when they have obtained his applauſe.

But though man has, in this manner, been rendered the immediate judge of mankind, he has been rendered ſo only in the firſt inſtance; and an appeal lies from his ſentence to a much higher tribunal, to the tribunal of their own conſciences, to that of the ſuppoſed impartial and well-informed ſpectator, to that of the man within the breaſt, the great judge and arbiter of their conduct. The juriſdictions of thoſe two tribunals are founded upon principles which, though in ſome reſpects reſembling and akin, are, however, in reality different and diſtinct. The juriſdiction of the man without, is founded altogether in the deſire of actual praiſe, and in the averſion to actual blame. The juriſdiction of the man within, is founded altogether in the deſire of praiſe-worthineſs, and in the averſion to blame-worthineſs; in the deſire of poſſeſſing thoſe qualities, and performing thoſe actions, which we love and admire in other people; and in the dread of poſſeſſing thoſe qualities,

and performing thoſe actions, which we hate and deſpiſe in other people. If the man without ſhould applaud us, either for actions which we have not performed, or for motives which had no influence upon us; the man within can immediately humble that pride and elevation of mind which ſuch groundleſs acclamations might otherwiſe occaſion, by telling us, that as we know that we do not deſerve them, we render ourſelves deſpicable by accepting them. If, on the contrary, the man without ſhould reproach us, either for actions which we never performed, or for motives which had no influence upon thoſe which we may have performed; the man within may immediately correct this falſe judgment, and aſſure us, that we are by no means the proper objects of that cenſure which has ſo unjuſtly been beſtowed upon us. But in this and in ſome other caſes, the man within ſeems ſometimes, as it were, aſtoniſhed and confounded by the vehemence and clamour of the man without. The violence and loudneſs, with which blame is ſometimes poured out upon us, ſeems to ſtupify and benumb our natural ſenſe of praiſe-worthineſs and blame-worthineſs; and the judgments of the man within, though not, perhaps, abſolutely altered or perverted, are, however, ſo much ſhaken in the ſteadineſs and firmneſs of their deciſion, that their natural effect, in ſecuring the tranquillity of the mind, is frequently in a great meaſure deſtroyed. We ſcarce dare to abſolve ourſelves, when all our brethren appear loudly to condemn us. The

ſuppoſed

PART III.

ſuppoſed impartial ſpectator of our conduct ſeems to give his opinion in our favour with fear and heſitation; when that of all the real ſpectators, when that of all thoſe with whoſe eyes and from whoſe ſtation he endeavours to conſider it, is unanimouſly and violently againſt us. In ſuch caſes, this demigod within the breaſt appears, like the demigods of the poets, though partly of immortal, yet partly too of mortal extraction. When his judgments are ſteadily and firmly directed by the ſenſe of praiſe-worthineſs and blame-worthineſs, he ſeems to act ſuitably to his divine extraction: But when he ſuffers himſelf to be aſtoniſhed and confounded by the judgments of ignorant and weak man, he diſcovers his connexion with mortality, and appears to act ſuitably, rather to the human, than to the divine, part of his origin.

In ſuch caſes, the only effectual conſolation of humbled and afflicted man lies in an appeal to a ſtill higher tribunal, to that of the all-ſeeing Judge of the world, whoſe eye can never be deceived, and whoſe judgments can never be perverted. A firm confidence in the unerring rectitude of this great tribunal, before which his innocence is in due time to be declared, and his virtue to be finally rewarded, can alone ſupport him under the weakneſs and deſpondency of his own mind, under the perturbation and aſtoniſhment of the man within the breaſt, whom nature has ſet up as, in this life, the great guardian, not only of his innocence, but of his tranquillity. Our happineſs in this life is thus, upon

upon many occaſions, dependent upon the humble hope and expectation of a life to come: a hope and expectation deeply rooted in human nature; which can alone ſupport its lofty ideas of its own dignity; can alone illumine the dreary proſpect of its continually approaching mortality, and maintain its cheerfulneſs under all the heavieſt calamities to which, from the diſorders of this life, it may ſometimes be expoſed. That there is a world to come, where exact juſtice will be done to every man, where every man will be ranked with thoſe who, in the moral and intellectual qualities, are really his equals; where the owner of thoſe humble talents and virtues which, from being depreſſed by fortunes, had, in this life, no opportunity of diſplaying themſelves; which were unknown, not only to the public, but which he himſelf could ſcarce be ſure that he poſſeſſed, and for which even the man within the breaſt could ſcarce venture to afford him any diſtinct and clear teſtimony; where that modeſt, ſilent, and unknown merit, will be placed upon a level, and ſometimes above thoſe who, in this world, had enjoyed the higheſt reputation, and who, from the advantage of their ſituation, had been enabled to perform the moſt ſplendid and dazzling actions; is a doctrine, in every reſpect ſo venerable, ſo comfortable to the weakneſs, ſo flattering to the grandeur of human nature, that the virtuous man who has the misfortune to doubt of it, cannot poſſibly avoid wiſhing moſt earneſtly and anxiouſly to believe it. It could

PART III. never have been expoſed to the derſion of the ſcoffer, had not the diſtribution of rewards and puniſhments, which ſome of its moſt zealous aſſertors have taught us was to be made in that world to come, been too frequently in direct oppoſition to all our moral ſentiments.

That the aſſiduous courtier is often more favoured than the faithful and active ſervant; that attendance and adulation are often ſhorter and ſurer roads to preferment than merit or ſervice; and that a campaign at Verſailles or St. James's is often worth two either in Germany or Flanders, is a complaint which we have all heard from many a venerable, but diſcontented, old officer. But what is conſidered as the greateſt reproach even to the weakneſs of earthly ſovereigns, has been aſcribed, as an act of juſtice, to divine perfection; and the duties of devotion, the public and private worſhip of the Deity, have been repreſented, even by men of virtue and abilities, as the ſole virtues which can either entitle to reward or exempt from puniſhment in the life to come. They were the virtues perhaps, moſt ſuitable to their ſtation, and in which they themſelves chiefly excelled; and we are all naturally diſpoſed to over-rate the excellencies of our own characters. In the diſcourſe which the eloquent and philoſophical Maſſillon pronounced, on giving his benediction to the ſtandards of the regiment of Catinat, there is the following addreſs to the officers: "What is moſt deplorable "in your ſituation, Gentlemen, is, that in a life "hard and painful, in which the ſervices and "the

›. duties ſometimes go beyond the rigour
d ſeverity of the moſt auſtere cloiſters; you
ſer always in vain for the life to come, and
quently even for this life. Alas! the ſolitary
nk in his cell, obliged to mortify the fleſh
d to ſubject it to the ſpirit, is ſupported by
e hope of an aſſured recompence, and by
e ſecret unction of that grace which ſoftens
e yoke of the Lord. But you, on the
d of death, can you dare to repreſent to
im your fatigues and the daily hardſhips
your employment? can you dare to ſolicit
im for any recompence? and in all the ex-
tions that you have made, in all the violences
at you have done to yourſelves, what is
ere that He ought to place to His own ac-
unt? The beſt days of your life, however,
ve been ſacrificed to your profeſſion, and
n years ſervice has more worn out your
dy, than would, perhaps, have done a
hole life of repentance and mortification.
las! my brother, one ſingle day of thoſe ſuf-
rings, conſecrated to the Lord, would, per-
ps, have obtained you an eternal happineſs.
ne ſingle action, painful to nature, and
fered up to Him, would, perhaps, have ſe-
red to you the inheritance of the Saints.
nd you have done all this, and in vain, for
is world."

› compare, in this manner, the futile morti-
ions of a monaſtery, to the ennobling hard-
and hazards of war; to ſuppoſe that one
or one hour, employed in the former ſhould,

PART III. in the eye of the great Judge of the world, have more merit than a whole life ſpent honourably in the latter, is ſurely contrary to all our moral ſentiments: to all the principles by which nature has taught us to regulate our contempt or admiration. It is this ſpirit, however, which, while it has reſerved the celeſtial regions for monks and friars, or for thoſe whoſe conduct and converſation reſembled thoſe of monks and friars, has condemned to the infernal all the heroes, all the ſtateſmen and lawgivers, all the poets and philoſophers of former ages; all thoſe who have invented, improved, or excelled in the arts, which contribute to the ſubſiſtence, to the conveniency, or to the ornament of human life; all the great protectors, inſtructors, and benefactors of mankind; all thoſe to whom our natural ſenſe of praiſe-worthineſs forces us to aſcribe the higheſt merit and moſt exalted virtue. Can we wonder that ſo ſtrange an application of this moſt reſpectable doctrine ſhould ſometimes have expoſed it to contempt and deriſion; with thoſe at leaſt who had themſelves, perhaps, no great taſte or turn for the devout and contemplative virtues *?

* See Voltaire.
Vous y grillez ſage et docte Platon,
Divin Homere, eloquent Ciceron, &c.

CHAP

CHAP. III.

e Influence and Authority of Conſcience.

' though the approbation of his own con-
ience can ſcarce, upon ſome extraordinary
ns, content the weakneſs of man; though
imony of the ſuppoſed impartial ſpectator
great inmate of the breaſt, cannot always
upport him; yet the influence and autho-
this principle is, upon all occaſions, very
and it is only by conſulting this judge
that we can ever ſee what relates to our-
in its proper ſhape and dimenſions; or
e can ever make any proper compariſon
n our own intereſts and thoſe of other

to the eye of the body, objects appear
or ſmall, not ſo much according to their
menſions, as according to the nearneſs or
e of their ſituation; ſo do they likewiſe
it may be called the natural eye of the
and we remedy the defects of both theſe
pretty much in the ſame manner. In my
t ſituation an immenſe landſcape of lawns,
oods, and diſtant mountains, ſeems to do
re than cover the little window which I
y, and to be out of all proportion leſs than
amber in which I am ſitting. I can form
compariſon between thoſe great objects
e little objects around me, in no other

PART III.

way, than by transporting myself, at least in fancy, to a different station, from whence I can survey both at nearly equal distances, and thereby form some judgment of their real proportions. Habit and experience have taught me to do this so easily and so readily, that I am scarce sensible that I do it; and a man must be, in some measure, acquainted with the philosophy of vision, before he can be thoroughly convinced, how little those distant objects would appear to the eye, if the imagination, from a knowledge of their real magnitudes, did not swell and dilate them.

In the same manner, to the selfish and original passions of human nature, the loss or gain of a very small interest of our own, appears to be of vastly more importance, excites a much more passionate joy or sorrow, a much more ardent desire or aversion, than the greatest concern of another with whom we have no particular connexion. His interests, as long as they are surveyed from this station, can never be put into the balance with our own, can never restrain us from doing whatever may tend to promote our own, how ruinous so ever to him. Before we can make any proper comparison of those opposite interests, we must change our position. We must view them, neither from our own place nor yet from his, neither with our own eyes nor yet with his, but from the place and with the eyes of a third person, who has no particular connexion with either, and who judges with impartiality between us. Here, too, habit and experience have taught us to do this so easily

ıfily and ſo readily, that we are ſcarce ſenſible ıat we do it; and it requires, in this caſe too, me degree of reflection, and even of philoſoıy, to convince us, how little intereſt we ould take in the greateſt concerns of our ɜighbour, how little we ſhould be affected by hatever relates to him, if the ſenſe of propriety ıd juſtice did not correct the otherwiſe natural equality of our ſentiments.

Let us ſuppoſe that the great empire of China, ith all its myriads of inhabitants, was ſuddenly ıallowed up by an earthquake, and let us conler how a man of humanity in Europe, who ıd no ſort of connexion with that part of the orld, would be affected upon receiving intelliɜnce of this dreadful calamity. He would, I ıagine, firſt of all, expreſs very ſtrongly his ırrow for the misfortune of that unhappy peoe, he would make many melancholy reflections ɔon the precarioufneſs of human life, and the ınity of all the labours of man, which could us be annihilated in a moment. He would o, perhaps, if he was a man of ſpeculation, ıter into many reaſonings concerning the ſects which this diſaſter might produce upon e commerce of Europe, and the trade and ıfineſs of the world in general. And when all is fine philoſophy was over, when all theſe ımane ſentiments had been once fairly exeſſed, he would purſue his buſineſs or his pleare, take his repoſe or his diverſion, with the me eaſe and tranquillity, as if no ſuch accident ıd happened. The moſt frivolous diſaſter

 which

PART III.

which could befal himſelf would occaſion a more real diſturbance. If he was to loſe his little finger to-morrow, he would not ſleep to-night; but, provided he never ſaw them, he will ſnore with the moſt profound ſecurity over the ruin of a hundred millions of his brethren, and the deſtruction of that immenſe multitude ſeems plainly an object leſs intereſting to him, than this paltry misfortune of his own. To prevent, therefore, this paltry misfortune to himſelf, would a man of humanity be willing to ſacrifice the lives of a hundred millions of his brethren, provided he had never ſeen them? Human nature ſtartles with horror at the thought, and the world, in its greateſt depravity and corruption, never produced ſuch a villain as could be capable of entertaining it. But what makes this difference? When our paſſive feelings are almoſt always ſo ſordid and ſo ſelfiſh, how comes it that our active principles ſhould often be ſo generous and ſo noble? When we are always ſo much more deeply affected by whatever concerns ourſelves, than by whatever concerns other men; what is it which prompts the generous, upon all occaſions, and the mean upon many, to ſacrifice their own intereſts to the greater intereſts of others? It is not the ſoft power of humanity, it is not that feeble ſpark of benevolence which Nature has lighted up in the human heart, that is thus capable of counteracting the ſtrongeſt impulſes of ſelf-love. It is a ſtronger power, a more forcible motive, which exerts itſelf upon ſuch occaſions. It is reaſon, principle, conſcience,

ience, the inhabitant of the breaſt, the man within, the great judge and arbiter of our conduct. It is he who, whenever we are about to act ſo as to affect the happineſs of others, calls to us, with a voice capable of aſtoniſhing the moſt preſumptuous of our paſſions, that we are but one of the multitude, in no reſpect better than any other in it; and that when we prefer ourſelves ſo ſhamefully and ſo blindly to others, we become the proper objects of reſentment, abhorrence, and execration. It is from him only that we learn the real littleneſs of ourſelves, and of whatever relates to ourſelves, and the natural miſrepreſentations of ſelf-love can be corrected only by the eye of this impartial ſpectator. It is he who ſhows us the propriety of generoſity and the deformity of injuſtice; the propriety of reſigning the greateſt intereſts of our own, for the yet greater intereſts of others, and the deformity of doing the ſmalleſt injury to another, in order to obtain the greateſt benefit to ourſelves. It is not the love of our neighbour, it is not the love of mankind, which upon many occaſions prompts us to the practice of thoſe divine virtues. It is a ſtronger love, a more powerful affection, which generally takes place upon ſuch occaſions; the love of what is honourable and noble, of the grandeur, and dignity, and ſuperiority of our own characters.

When the happineſs or miſery of others depends in any reſpect upon our conduct, we dare not, as ſelf-love might ſuggeſt to us, prefer the

PART III. intereſt of one to that of many. The man within immediately calls to us, that we value ourſelves too much and other people too little, and that, by doing ſo, we render ourſelves the proper object of the contempt and indignation of our brethren. Neither is this ſentiment confined to men of extraordinary magnanimity and virtue. It is deeply impreſſed upon every tolerably good ſoldier, who feels that he would become the ſcorn of his companions, if he could be ſuppoſed capable of ſhrinking from danger, or of heſitating, either to expoſe or to throw away his life, when the good of the ſervice required it.

One individual muſt never prefer himſelf ſo much even to any other individual, as to hurt or injure that other, in order to benefit himſelf, though the benefit to the one ſhould be much greater than the hurt or injury to the other. The poor man muſt neither defraud nor ſteal from the rich, though the acquiſition might be much more beneficial to the one than the loſs could be hurtful to the other. The man within immediately calls to him in this caſe too, that he is no better than his neighbour, and that by this unjuſt preference he renders himſelf the proper object of the contempt and indignation of mankind; as well as of the puniſhment which that contempt and indignation muſt naturally diſpoſe them to inflict, for having thus violated one of thoſe ſacred rules, upon the tolerable obſervation of which depend the whole ſecurity and peace of human ſociety. There is no commonly

ly honeſt man who does not more dread the ard diſgrace of ſuch an action, the indelible n which it would for ever ſtamp upon his own d, than the greateſt external calamity which, hout any fault of his own, could poſſibly befal ; and who does not inwardly feel the truth hat great ſtoical maxim, that for one man to rive another unjuſtly of any thing, or unjuſtly romote his own advantage by the loſs or diſ- antage of another, is more contrary to nature, n death, than poverty, than pain, than all misfortunes which can affect him, either in body, or in his external circumſtances.

When the happineſs or miſery of others, in- d, in no reſpect depends upon our conduct, en our intereſts are altogether ſeparated and ached from theirs, ſo that there is neither nexion nor competition between them, we not always think it ſo neceſſary to reſtrain, er our natural and, perhaps, improper iety about our own affairs, or our natural l, perhaps, equally improper indifference about ſe of other men. The moſt vulgar education ches us to act, upon all important occaſions, h ſome ſort of impartiality between ourſelves d others, and even the ordinary commerce of world is capable of adjuſting our active prin- les to ſome degree of propriety. But it is e moſt artificial and refined education only, it s been ſaid, which can correct the inequali- s of our paſſive feelings; and we muſt for is purpoſe, it has been pretended, have re-

PART III. courſe to the ſevereſt, as well as to the profoundeſt philoſophy.

Two different ſets of philoſophers have attempted to teach us this hardeſt of all the leſſons of morality. One ſet have laboured to increaſe our ſenſibility to the intereſts of others; another, to diminiſh that to our own. The firſt would have us feel for others as we naturally feel for ourſelves. The ſecond would have us feel for ourſelves as we naturally feel for others. Both, perhaps, have carried their doctrines a good deal beyond the juſt ſtandard of nature and propriety.

The firſt are thoſe whining and melancholy moraliſts, who are perpetually reproaching us with our happineſs, while ſo many of our brethren are in miſery *, who regard as impious the natural joy of proſperity, which does not think of the many wretches that are at every inſtant labouring under all ſorts of calamities, in the languor of poverty, in the agony of diſeaſe, in the horrors of death, under the inſults and oppreſſion of their enemies. Commiſeration for thoſe miſeries which we never ſaw, which we never heard of, but which we may be aſſured are at all times infeſting ſuch numbers of our fellow-creatures, ought, they think, to damp the pleaſures of the fortunate, and to render a

* See Thomſon's Seaſons, Winter:
"Ah! little think the gay licentious proud," &c.
See alſo Paſcal.

certain

certain melancholy dejection habitual to all men. But first of all, this extreme sympathy with misfortunes which we know nothing about, seems altogether absurd and unreasonable. Take the whole earth at an average, for one man who suffers pain or misery, you will find twenty in prosperity and joy, or at least in tolerable circumstances. No reason, surely, can be assigned why we should rather weep with the one than with the twenty. This artificial commiseration, besides, is not only absurd, but seems altogether unattainable; and those who affect this character have commonly nothing but a certain affected and sentimental sadness, which, without reaching the heart, serves only to render the countenance and conversation impertinently dismal and disagreeable. And last of all, this disposition of mind, though it could be attained, would be perfectly useless, and could serve no other purpose than to render miserable the person who possessed it. Whatever interest we take in the fortune of those with whom we have no acquaintance or connexion, and who are placed altogether out of the sphere of our activity, can produce only anxiety to ourselves, without any manner of advantage to them. To what purpose should we trouble ourselves about the world in the moon? All men, even those at the greatest distance, are no doubt entitled to our good wishes, and our good wishes we naturally give them. But if, notwithstanding, they should be unfortunate, to give ourselves any anxiety upon that account, seems to be no part of our duty. That we

PART III. we ſhould be but little intereſted, therefore, in the fortune of thoſe whom we can neither ſerve nor hurt, and who are in every reſpect ſo very remote from us, ſeems wiſely ordered by Nature; and if it were poſſible to alter in this reſpect the original conſtitution of our frame, we could yet gain nothing by the change.

It is never objected to us that we have too little fellow-feeling with the joy of ſucceſs. Wherever envy does not prevent it, the favour which we bear to proſperity is rather apt to be too great; and the ſame moraliſts who blame us for want of ſufficient ſympathy with the miſerable, reproach us for the levity with which we are too apt to admire and almoſt to worſhip the fortunate, the powerful, and the rich.

Among the moraliſts who endeavour to correct the natural inequality of our paſſive feelings by diminiſhing our ſenſibility to what peculiarly concerns ourſelves, we may count all the ancient ſects of philoſophers, but particularly the ancient Stoics. Man, according to the Stoics, ought to regard himſelf, not as ſomething ſeparated and detached, but as a citizen of the world, a member of the vaſt commonwealth of nature. To the intereſt of this great community, he ought at all times to be willing that his own little intereſt ſhould be ſacrificed. Whatever concerns himſelf, ought to affect him no more than whatever concerns any other equally important part of this immenſe ſyſtem. We ſhould view ourſelves, not in the light in which our own ſelfiſh paſſions are apt to place us, but in the light in which

which any other citizen of the world would view us. What befalls ourſelves we ſhould regard as what befalls our neighbour, or, what comes to the ſame thing, as our neighbour regards what befalls us. "When our neighbour," ſays Epictetus, "loſes his wife, or his ſon, there is no-"body who is not ſenſible that this is a human "calamity, a natural event altogether accord-"ing to the ordinary courſe of things; but, "when the ſame thing happens to ourſelves, "then we cry out, as if we had ſuffered the "moſt dreadful misfortune. We ought, how-"ever, to remember how we were affected when "this accident happened to another, and ſuch "as we were in his caſe, ſuch ought we to be in "our own."

Thoſe private misfortunes, for which our feelings are apt to go beyond the bounds of propriety, are of two different kinds. They are either ſuch as affect us only indirectly, by affecting, in the firſt place, ſome other perſons who are particularly dear to us; ſuch as our parents, our children, our brothers and ſiſters, our intimate friends; or they are ſuch as affect ourſelves immediately and directly, either in our body, in our fortune, or in our reputation; ſuch as pain, ſickneſs, approaching death, poverty, diſgrace, &c.

In misfortunes of the firſt kind, our emotions may, no doubt, go very much beyond what exact propriety will admit of; but they may likewiſe fall ſhort of it, and they frequently do ſo: The man who ſhould feel no more for the death

PART III.

death or diſtreſs of his own father, or ſon, than for thoſe of any other man's father or ſon, would appear neither a good ſon nor a good father. Such unnatural indifference, far from exciting our applauſe, would incur our higheſt diſapprobation. Of thoſe domeſtic affections, however, ſome are moſt apt to offend by their exceſs, and others by their defect. Nature, for the wiſeſt purpoſes, has rendered, in moſt men, perhaps in all men, parental tenderneſs a much ſtronger affection than filial piety. The continuance and propagation of the ſpecies depend altogether upon the former, and not upon the latter. In ordinary caſes, the exiſtence and preſervation of the child depend altogether upon the care of the parents. Thoſe of the parents ſeldom depend upon that of the child. Nature, therefore, has rendered the former affection ſo ſtrong, that it generally requires not to be excited, but to be moderated; and moraliſts ſeldom endeavour to teach us how to indulge, but generally how to reſtrain our fondneſs, our exceſſive attachment, the unjuſt preference which we are diſpoſed to give to our own children above thoſe of other people. They exhort us, on the contrary, to an affectionate attention to our parents, and to make a proper return to them, in their old age, for the kindneſs which they had ſhown to us in our infancy and youth. In the Decalogue we are commanded to honour our fathers and mothers. No mention is made of the love of our children. Nature had ſufficiently prepared us for the performance

'this latter duty. Men are ſeldom accuſed of ſecting to be fonder of their children than ey really are. They have ſometimes been ſpected of diſplaying their piety to their rents with too much oſtentation. The oſtentious ſorrow of widows has, for a like reaſon, een ſuſpected of inſincerity. We ſhould reect, could we believe it ſincere, even the exeſs of ſuch kind affections; and though we ight not perfectly approve, we ſhould not verely condemn it. That it appears praiſeorthy, at leaſt in the eyes of thoſe who affect , the very affectation is a proof.

Even the exceſs of thoſe kind affections which re moſt apt to offend by their exceſs, though it ay appear blamable, never appears odious. Ve blame the exceſſive fondneſs and anxiety of parent, as ſomething which may, in the end, rove hurtful to the child, and which, in the ean time, is exceſſively inconvenient to the rent; but we eaſily pardon it, and never gard it with hatred and deteſtation. But the fect of this uſually exceſſive affection appears ways peculiarly odious. The man who appears feel nothing for his own children, but who eats them upon all occaſions with unmerited verity and harſhneſs, ſeems of all brutes the oſt deteſtable. The ſenſe of propriety, ſo far om requiring us to eradicate altogether that traordinary ſenſibility, which we naturally el for the misfortunes of our neareſt connecons, is always much more offended by the fect, than it ever is by the exceſs of that ſenſi-

PART III.

ſenſibility. The ſtoical apathy is, in ſuch caſes, never agreeable, and all the metaphyſical ſophiſms by which it is ſupported can ſeldom ſerve any other purpoſe than to blow up the hard inſenſibility of a coxcomb to ten times its native impertinence. The poets and romance writers, who beſt paint the refinements and delicacies of love and friendſhip, and of all other private and domeſtic affections, Racine and Voltaire; Richardſon, Maurivaux, and Riccoboni; are, in ſuch caſes, much better inſtructors than Zeno, Chryſippus, or Epictetus.

That moderated ſenſibility to the misfortunes of others, which does not diſqualify us for the performance of any duty; the melancholy and affectionate remembrance of our departed friends; *the pang*, as Gray ſays, *to ſecret ſorrow dear;* are by no means undelicious ſenſations. Though they outwardly wear the features of pain and grief, they are all inwardly ſtamped with the ennobling characters of virtue and ſelf-approbation.

It is otherwiſe in the misfortunes which affect ourſelves immediately and directly, either in our body, in our fortune, or in our reputation. The ſenſe of propriety is much more apt to be offended by the exceſs, than by the defect of our ſenſibility, and there are but very few caſes in which we can approach too near to the ſtoical apathy and indifference.

That we have very little fellow-feeling with any of the paſſions which take their origin from the body, has already been obſerved. That pain which

hich is occaſioned by an evident cauſe; ſuch s, the cutting or tearing of the fleſh; is, perps, the affection of the body with which the ectator feels the moſt lively ſympathy. The pproaching death of his neighbour, too, ſeldom ils to affect him a good deal. In both caſes, owever, he feels ſo very little in compariſon of hat the perſon principally concerned feels, that he latter can ſcarce ever offend the former by ppearing to ſuffer with too much eaſe.

The mere want of fortune, mere poverty, xcites little compaſſion. Its complaints are too pt to be the objects rather of contempt than of f fellow-feeling. We deſpiſe a beggar; and, hough his importunities may extort an alms from s, he is ſcarce ever the object of any ſerious commiſeration. The fall from riches to poverty, s it commonly occaſions the moſt real diſtreſs o the ſufferer, ſo it ſeldom fails to excite the moſt ſincere commiſeration in the ſpectator. Though, in the preſent ſtate of ſociety, this miſortune can ſeldom happen without ſome miſconduct, and ſome very conſiderable miſconduct oo, in the ſufferer; yet he is almoſt always ſo much pitied that he is ſcarce ever allowed to all into the loweſt ſtate of poverty; but by the means of his friends, frequently by the indulgence f thoſe very creditors who have much reaſon to complain of his imprudence, is almoſt always ſupported in ſome degree of decent, though humble, mediocrity. To perſons under ſuch misfortunes, we could, perhaps, eaſily pardon ſome degree of weakneſs; but at the ſame time,

 they

PART III. they who carry the firmeſt countenance, who accommodate themſelves with the greateſt eaſe to their new ſituation, who ſeem to feel no humiliation from the change, but to reſt their rank in the ſociety, not upon their fortune, but upon their character and conduct, are always the moſt approved of, and never fail to command our higheſt and moſt affectionate admiration.

As, of all the external misfortunes which can affect an innocent man immediately and directly, the undeſerved loſs of reputation is certainly the greateſt; ſo a conſiderable degree of ſenſibility to whatever can bring on ſo great a calamity, does not always appear ungraceful or diſagreeable. We often eſteem a young man the more, when he reſents, though with ſome degree of violence, any unjuſt reproach that may have been thrown upon his character or his honour. The affliction of an innocent young lady, on account of the groundleſs ſurmiſes which may have been circulated concerning her conduct, appears often perfectly amiable. Perſons of an advanced age, whom long experience of the folly and injuſtice of the world, has taught to pay little regard, either to its cenſure or to its applauſe, neglect and deſpiſe obloquy, and do not even deign to honour its futile authors with any ſerious reſentment. This indifference, which is founded altogether on a firm confidence in their own well-tried and well-eſtabliſhed characters, would be diſagreeable in young people, who neither can nor ought to have any ſuch confidence. It might in them be ſuppoſed to forebode,

forebode, in their advancing years, a moſt improper inſenſibility to real honour and infamy.

In all other private misfortunes which affect ourſelves immediately and directly, we can very ſeldom offend by appearing to be too little affected. We frequently remember our ſenſibility to the misfortunes of others with pleaſure and ſatisfaction. We can ſeldom remember that to our own, without ſome degree of ſhame and humiliation.

If we examine the different ſhades and gradations of weakneſs and ſelf-command, as we meet with them in common life, we ſhall very eaſily ſatisfy ourſelves that this control of our paſſive feelings muſt be acquired, not from the abſtruſe ſyllogiſms of a quibbling dialectic, but from that great diſcipline which Nature has eſtabliſhed for the acquiſition of this and of every other virtue; a regard to the ſentiments of the real or ſuppoſed ſpectator of our conduct.

A very young child has no ſelf-command; but, whatever are its emotions, whether fear, or grief, or anger, it endeavours always, by the violence of his out-cries, to alarm, as much as it can, the attention of its nurſe, or of its parents. While it remains under the cuſtody of ſuch partial protectors, its anger is the firſt and, perhaps, the only paſſion which it is taught to moderate. By noiſe and threatening they are, for their own eaſe, often obliged to frighten it into good temper; and the paſſion which incites it to attack, is reſtrained by that which teaches

PART III.

it to attend to its own ſafety. When it is old enough to go to ſchool, or to mix with its equals, it ſoon finds that they have no ſuch indulgent partiality. It naturally wiſhes to gain their favour, and to avoid their hatred or contempt. Regard even to its own ſafety teaches it to do ſo; and it ſoon finds that it can do ſo in no other way than by moderating, not only its anger, but all its other paſſions, to the degree which its playfellows and companions are likely to be pleaſed with. It thus enters into the great ſchool of ſelf-command, it ſtudies to be more and more maſter of itſelf, and begins to exerciſe over its own feelings a diſcipline which the practice of the longeſt life is very ſeldom ſufficient to bring to complete perfection.

In all private misfortunes, in pain, in ſickneſs, in ſorrow, the weakeſt man, when his friend, and ſtill more when a ſtranger viſits him, is immediately impreſſed with the view in which they are likely to look upon his ſituation. Their view calls off his attention from his own view; and his breaſt is, in ſome meaſure, becalmed the moment they come into his preſence. This effect is produced inſtantaneouſly and, as it were, mechanically; but, with a weak man, it is not of long continuance. His own view of his ſituation immediately recurs upon him. He abandons himſelf, as before, to ſighs and tears and lamentations; and endeavours, like a child that has not yet gone to ſchool, to produce ſome ſort of harmony between his own grief and the compaſſion of the ſpectator, not by moderating the

the former, but by importunately calling upon the latter. CHAP. III.

With a man of a little more firmneſs, the effect is ſomewhat more permanent. He endeavours, as much as he can, to fix his attention upon the view which the company are likely to take of his ſituation. He feels, at the ſame time, the eſteem and approbation which they naturally conceive for him when he thus preſerves his tranquillity; and, though under the preſſure of ſome recent and great calamity, appears to feel for himſelf no more than what they really feel for him. He approves and applauds himſelf by ſympathy with their approbation, and the pleaſure which he derives from this ſentiment ſupports and enables him more eaſily to continue this generous effort. In moſt caſes he avoids mentioning his own miſfortune; and his company, if they are tolerably well bred, are careful to ſay nothing which can put him in mind of it. He endeavours to entertain them, in his uſual way, upon indifferent ſubjects, or, if he feels himſelf ſtrong enough to venture to mention his misfortune, he endeavours to talk of it as, he thinks, they are capable of talking of it, and even to feel it no further than they are capable of feeling it. If he has not, however, been well inured to the hard diſcipline of ſelf-command, he ſoon grows weary of this reſtraint. A long viſit fatigues him; and, towards the end of it, he is conſtantly in danger of doing, what he never fails to do the moment it is over, of abandoning himſelf to all the weakneſs of exceſſive ſorrow. Modern good man-

PART III.

ners, which are extremely indulgent to human weakneſs, forbid, for ſome time, the viſits of ſtrangers to perſons under great family diſtreſs, and permit thoſe only of the neareſt relations and moſt intimate friends. The preſence of the latter, it is thought, will impoſe leſs reſtraint than that of the former; and the ſufferers can more eaſily accommodate themſelves to the feelings of thoſe, from whom they have reaſon to expect a more indulgent ſympathy. Secret enemies, who fancy that they are not known to be ſuch, are frequently fond of making thoſe charitable viſits as early as the moſt intimate friends. The weakeſt man in the world, in this caſe, endeavours to ſupport his manly countenance, and, from indignation and contempt of their malice, to behave with as much gaiety and eaſe as he can.

The man of real conſtancy and firmneſs, the wiſe and juſt man who has been thoroughly bred in the great ſchool of ſelf-command, in the buſtle and buſineſs of the world, expoſed, perhaps, to the violence and injuſtice of faction, and to the hardſhips and hazards of war, maintains this control of his paſſive feelings upon all occaſions; and whether in ſolitude or in ſociety, wears nearly the ſame countenance, and is affected very nearly in the ſame manner. In ſucceſs and in diſappointment, in proſperity and in adverſity, before friends and before enemies, he has often been under the neceſſity of ſupporting this manhood. He has never dared to forget for one moment the judgment which the impartial

ſpectator

pectator would pafs upon his fentiments and conduct. He has never dared to fuffer the man within the breaft to be abfent one moment from his attention. With the eyes of this great inmate he has always been accuftomed to regard whatever relates to himfelf. This habit has become perfectly familiar to him. He has been in the conftant practice, and, indeed, under the conftant neceffity, of modelling, or of endeavouring to model, not only his outward conduct and behaviour, but, as much as he can, even his inward fentiments and feelings, according to thofe of this awful and refpectable judge. He does not merely affect the fentiments of the impartial fpectator. He really adopts them. He almoft identifies himfelf with, he almoft becomes himfelf that impartial fpectator, and fcarce even feels but as that great arbiter of his conduct directs him to feel.

The degree of the felf-approbation with which every man, upon fuch occafions, furveys his own conduct, is higher or lower, exactly in proportion to the degree of felf-command which is neceffary in order to obtain that felf-approbation. Where little felf-command is neceffary, little felf-approbation is due. The man who has only fcratched his finger, cannot much applaud himfelf, though he fhould immediately appear to have forgot this paltry misfortune. The man who has loft his leg by a cannot fhot, and who, the moment after, fpeaks and acts with his ufual coolnefs and tranquillity, as he exerts a much higher degree of felf-command, fo he

PART III. naturally feels a much higher degree of self-approbation. With most men, upon such an accident, their own natural view of their own misfortune would force itself upon them with such a vivacity and strength of colouring, as would entirely efface all thought of every other view. They would feel nothing, they could attend to nothing, but their own pain and their own fear; and not only the judgment of the ideal man within the breast, but that of the real spectators who might happen to be present, would be entirely overlooked and disregarded.

The reward which Nature bestows upon good behaviour under misfortune, is thus exactly proportioned to the degree of that good behaviour. The only compensation she could possibly make for the bitterness of pain and distress is thus too, in equal degrees of good behaviour, exactly proportioned to the degree of that pain and distress. In proportion to the degree of self-command which is necessary in order to conquer our natural sensibility, the pleasure and pride of the conquest are so much the greater; and this pleasure and pride are so great that no man can be altogether unhappy who completely enjoys them. Misery and wretchedness can never enter the breast in which dwells complete self-satisfaction; and though it may be too much, perhaps, to say, with the Stoics, that, under such an accident as that above mentioned, the happiness of a wise man is in every respect equal to what it could have been under any other

other circumſtances; yet it muſt be acknowledged, at leaſt, that this complete enjoyment of his own ſelf-applauſe, though it may not altogether extinguiſh, muſt certainly very much alleviate his ſenſe of his own ſufferings. CHAP. III.

In ſuch paroxyſms of diſtreſs, if I may be allowed to call them ſo, the wiſeſt and firmeſt man, in order to preſerve his equanimity, is obliged, I imagine, to make a conſiderable, and even a painful exertion. His own natural feeling of his own diſtreſs, his own natural view of his own ſituation, preſſes hard upon him, and he cannot, without a very great effort, fix his attention upon that of the impartial ſpectator. Both views preſent themſelves to him at the ſame time. His ſenſe of honour, his regard to his own dignity, directs him to fix his whole attention upon the one view. His natural, his untaught, and undiſciplined feelings, are continually calling it off to the other. He does not, in this caſe, perfectly identify himſelf with the ideal man within the breaſt, he does not become himſelf the impartial ſpectator of his own conduct. The different views of both characters exiſt in his mind ſeparate and diſtinct from one another, and each directing him to a behaviour different from that to which the other directs him. When he follows that view which honour and dignity point out to him, Nature does not, indeed, leave him without a recompenſe. He enjoys his own complete ſelf-approbation, and the applauſe of every candid and impartial ſpectator. By her unalterable laws, however, he ſtill ſuffers; and the

PART III. the recompenſe which ſhe beſtows, though very conſiderable, is not ſufficient completely to compenſate the ſufferings which thoſe laws inflict. Neither is it fit that it ſhould. If it did completely compenſate them, he could, from ſelf-intereſt, have no motive for avoiding an accident which muſt neceſſarily diminiſh his utility both to himſelf and to ſociety; and Nature, from her parental care of both, meant that he ſhould anxiouſly avoid all ſuch accidents. He ſuffers, therefore, and though in the agony of the paroxyſm, he maintains, not only the manhood of his countenance, but the ſedateneſs and ſobriety of his judgment, it requires his utmoſt and moſt fatiguing exertions to do ſo.

By the conſtitution of human nature, however, agony can never be permanent; and, if he ſurvives the paroxyſm, he ſoon comes, without any effort, to enjoy his ordinary tranquillity. A man with a wooden leg ſuffers, no doubt, and foreſees that he muſt continue to ſuffer during the remainder of his life, a very conſiderable inconveniency. He ſoon comes to view it, however, exactly as every impartial ſpectator views it; as an inconveniency under which he can enjoy all the ordinary pleaſures both of ſolitude and of ſociety. He ſoon identifies himſelf with the ideal man within the breaſt, he ſoon becomes himſelf the impartial ſpectator of his own ſituation. He no longer weeps, he no longer laments, he no longer grieves over it, as a weak man may ſometimes do in the beginning. The view of the impartial ſpectator becomes ſo per-

fectly habitual to him, that, without any effort, without any exertion, he never thinks of surveying his misfortune in any other view.

The never-failing certainty with which all men, sooner or later, accommodate themselves to whatever becomes their permanent situation, may, perhaps, induce us to think that the Stoics were, at least, thus far very nearly in the right; that, between one permanent situation and another, there was, with regard to real happiness, no essential difference: or that, if there were any difference, it was no more than just sufficient to render some of them the objects of simple choice or preference; but not of any earnest or anxious desire: and others, of simple rejection, as being fit to be set aside or avoided; but not of any earnest or anxious aversion. Happiness consists in tranquillity and enjoyment. Without tranquillity there can be no enjoyment; and where there is perfect tranquillity there is scarce any thing which is not capable of amusing. But in every permanent situation, where there is no expectation of change, the mind of every man, in a longer or shorter time, returns to its natural and usual state of tranquillity. In prosperity, after a certain time, it falls back to that state; in adversity, after a certain time, it rises up to it. In the confinement and solitude of the Bastile, after a certain time, the fashionable and frivolous Count de Lauzun recovered tranquillity enough to be capable of amusing himself with feeding a spider. A mind better furnished would, perhaps,

PART III.

haps, have both ſooner recovered its tranquillity, and ſooner found, in its own thoughts, a much better amuſement.

The great ſource of both the miſery and diſorders of human life, ſeems to ariſe from over-rating the difference between one permanent ſituation and another. Avarice over-rates the difference between poverty and riches: ambition, that between a private and a public ſtation: vain-glory, that between obſcurity and extenſive reputation. The perſon under the influence of any of thoſe extravagant paſſions, is not only miſerable in his actual ſituation, but is often diſpoſed to diſturb the peace of ſociety, in order to arrive at that which he ſo fooliſhly admires. The ſlighteſt obſervation, however, might ſatisfy him, that, in all the ordinary ſituations of human life, a well-diſpoſed mind may be equally calm, equally cheerful, and equally contented. Some of thoſe ſituations may, no doubt, deſerve to be preferred to others: but none of them can deſerve to be purſued with that paſſionate ardour which drives us to violate the rules either of prudence or of juſtice; or to corrupt the future tranquillity of our minds, either by ſhame from the remembrance of our own folly, or by remorſe from the horror of our own injuſtice. Wherever prudence does not direct, wherever juſtice does not permit, the attempt to change our ſituation, the man who does attempt it, plays at the moſt unequal of all games of hazard, and ſtakes every thing againſt ſcarce any thing. What the favourite of the King of Epirus

l to his maſter, may be applied to men in the ordinary ſituations of human life. When e king had recounted to him, in their proper der, all the conqueſts which he propoſed to ake, and had come to the laſt of them; And at does Your Majeſty propoſe to do then? d the Favourite: — I propoſe then, ſaid the ing, to enjoy myſelf with my friends, and deavour to be good company over a bottle.— nd what hinders Your Majeſty from doing ſo w? replied the Favourite. In the moſt glitring and exalted ſituation that our idle fancy n hold out to us, the pleaſures from which propoſe to derive our real happineſs, are noſt always the ſame with thoſe which, in our nal, though humble ſtation, we have at all nes at hand, and in our power. Except the volous pleaſures of vanity and ſuperiority, we ly find, in the moſt humble ſtation, where ere is only perſonal liberty, every other which e moſt exalted can afford; and the pleaſures vanity and ſuperiority are ſeldom conſiſtent th perfect tranquillity, the principle and foundation of all real and ſatisfactory enjoyment. either is it always certain that, in the ſplendid nation which we aim at, thoſe real and ſatisctory pleaſures can be enjoyed with the ſame urity as in the humble one which we are ſo ry eager to abandon. Examine the records hiſtory, recollect what has happened within e circle of your own experience, conſider with tention what has been the conduct of almoſt l the greatly unfortunate, either in private or public

PART III.

public life, whom you may have either read of, or heard of, or remember; and you will find that the misfortunes of by far the greater part of them have arifen from their not knowing when they were well, when it was proper for them to fit ftill and to be contented. The infcription upon the tomb-ftone of the man who had endeavoured to mend a tolerable conftitution by taking phyfic; "*I was well, I wifhed to be better; here I am*;" may generally be applied with great juftnefs to the diftrefs of difappointed avarice and ambition.

It may be thought a fingular, but I believe it to be a juft obfervation, that, in the misfortunes which admit of fome remedy, the greater part of men do not either fo readily or fo univerfally recover their natural and ufual tranquillity, as in thofe which plainly admit of none. In misfortunes of the latter kind, it is chiefly in what may be called the paroxyfm, or in the firft attack, that we can difcover any fenfible difference between the fentiments and behaviour of the wife and thofe of the weak man. In the end, Time, the great and univerfal comforter, gradually compofes the weak man to the fame degree of tranquillity which a regard to his own dignity and manhood teaches the wife man to affume in the beginning. The cafe of the man with the wooden leg is an obvious example of this. In the irreparable misfortunes occafioned by the death of children, or of friends and relations, even a wife man may for fome time indulge himfelf in fome degree

f moderated ſorrow. An affectionate, but reak woman, is often, upon ſuch occaſions, lmoſt perfectly diſtracted. Time, however, n a longer or ſhorter period, never fails to ompoſe the weakeſt woman to the ſame degree f tranquillity as the ſtrongeſt man. In all the reparable calamities which affect himſelf immediately and directly, a wiſe man endeavours, rom the beginning, to anticipate and to enjoy efore-hand, that tranquillity which he foreſees he courſe of a few months, or a few years, will ertainly reſtore to him in the end.

In the misfortunes for which the nature f things admits, or ſeems to admit, of a emedy, but in which the means of applying that remedy are not within the reach of he ſufferer, his vain and fruitleſs attempts to reſtore himſelf to his former ſituation, his continual anxiety for their ſucceſs, his repeated diſappointments upon their miſcarriage, are what chiefly hinder him from reſuming his natural tranquillity, and frequently render miſerable, during the whole of his life, a man to whom a greater misfortune, but which plainly admitted of no remedy, would not have given a fortnight's diſturbance. In the fall from royal favour to diſgrace, from power to inſignificancy, from riches to poverty, from liberty to confinement, from ſtrong health to ſome lingering, chronical, and perhaps incurable diſeaſe, the man who ſtruggles the leaſt, who moſt eaſily and readily acquieſces in the fortune which has fallen

PART III.

fallen to him, very ſoon recovers his uſual and natural tranquillity, and ſurveys the moſt diſagreeable circumſtances of his actual ſituation in the ſame light, or, perhaps, in a much leſs unfavourable light, than that in which the moſt indifferent ſpectator is diſpoſed to ſurvey them. Faction, intrigue, and cabal, diſturb the quiet of the unfortunate ſtateſman. Extravagant projects, viſions of gold mines, interrupt the repoſe of the ruined bankrupt. The priſoner, who is continually plotting to eſcape from his confinement, cannot enjoy that careleſs ſecurity which even a priſon can afford him. The medicines of the phyſician are often the greateſt torment of the incurable patient. The monk who, in order to comfort Joanna of Caſtile, upon the death of her huſband Philip, told her of a King, who, fourteen years after his deceaſe, had been reſtored to life again, by the prayers of his afflicted queen, was not likely, by his legendary tale, to reſtore ſedateneſs to the diſtempered mind of that unhappy Princeſs. She endeavoured to repeat the ſame experiment in hopes of the ſame ſucceſs; reſiſted for a long time the burial of her huſband, ſoon after raiſed his body from the grave, attended it almoſt conſtantly herſelf, and watched, with all the impatient anxiety of frantic expectation, the happy moment when her wiſhes were to be gratified by the revival of her beloved Philip *.

* See Robertſon's Charles V. vol. ii. pp. 14 and 15. firſt edit.

Our

Our ſenſi lity to the feelings of others, ſo far from being inconſiſtent with the manhood of ſelf-command, is the very principle upon which that manhood is founded. The very ſame principle or inſtinct which, in the misfortune of our neighbour, prompts us to compaſſionate his ſorrow; in our own misfortune, prompts us to reſtrain the abject and miſerable lamentations of our own ſorrow. The ſame principle or inſtinct which, in his proſperity and ſucceſs, prompts us to congratulate his joy; in our own proſperity and ſucceſs, prompts us to reſtrain the levity and intemperance of our own joy. In both caſes, the propriety of our own ſentiments and feelings ſeems to be exactly in proportion to the vivacity and force with which we enter into and conceive his ſentiments and feelings.

The man of the moſt perfect virtue, the man whom we naturally love and revere the moſt, is he who joins, to the moſt perfect command of his own original and ſelfiſh feelings, the moſt exquiſite ſenſibility both to the original and ſympathetic feelings of others. The man who, to all the ſoft, the amiable, and the gentle virtues, joins all the great, the awful, and the reſpectable, muſt ſurely be the natural and proper object of our higheſt love and admiration.

The perſon beſt fitted by nature for acquiring the former of thoſe two ſets of virtues, is likewiſe neceſſarily beſt fitted for acquiring the latter. The man who feels the moſt for the joys

PART III. and ſorrows of others, is beſt fitted for acquiring the moſt complete control of his own joys and ſorrows. The man of the moſt exquiſite humanity, is naturally the moſt capable of acquiring the higheſt degree of ſelf-command. He may not, however, always have acquired it; and it very frequently happens that he has not. He may have lived too much in eaſe and tranquillity. He may have never been expoſed to the violence of faction, or to the hardſhips and hazards of war. He may have never experienced the inſolence of his ſuperiors, the jealous and malignant envy of his equals, or the pilfering injuſtice of his inferiors. When, in an advanced age, ſome accidental change of fortune expoſes him to all theſe, they all make too great an impreſſion upon him. He has the diſpoſition which fits him for acquiring the moſt perfect ſelf-command; but he has never had the opportunity of acquiring it. Exerciſe and practice have been wanting; and without theſe no habit can ever be tolerably eſtabliſhed. Hardſhips, dangers, injuries, misfortunes, are the only maſters under whom we can learn the exerciſe of this virtue. But theſe are all maſters to whom nobody willingly puts himſelf to ſchool.

The ſituations in which the gentle virtue of humanity can be moſt happily cultivated, are by no means the ſame with thoſe which are beſt fitted for forming the auſtere virtue of ſelf-command. The man who is himſelf at eaſe can beſt attend to the diſtreſs of others. The man who

who is himſelf expoſed to hardſhips is moſt immediately called upon to attend to, and to control his own feelings. In the mild ſunſhine of undiſturbed tranquillity, in the calm retirement of undiſſipated and philoſophical leiſure, the ſoft virtue of humanity flouriſhes the moſt, and is capable of the higheſt improvement. But, in ſuch ſituations, the greateſt and nobleſt exertions of ſelf-command have little exerciſe. Under the boiſterous and ſtormy ſky of war and faction, of public tumult and confuſion, the ſturdy ſeverity of ſelf-command proſpers the moſt, and can be the moſt ſucceſsfully cultivated. But, in ſuch ſituations, the ſtrongeſt ſuggeſtions of humanity muſt frequently be ſtifled or neglected; and every ſuch neglect neceſſarily tends to weaken the principle of humanity. As it may frequently be the duty of a ſoldier not to take, ſo it may ſometimes be his duty not to give quarter; and the humanity of the man who has been ſeveral times under the neceſſity of ſubmitting to this diſagreeable duty, can ſcarce fail to ſuffer a conſiderable diminution. For his own eaſe, he is too apt to learn to make light of the misfortunes which he is ſo often under the neceſſity of occaſioning; and the ſituations which call forth the nobleſt exertions of ſelf-command, by impoſing the neceſſity of violating ſometimes the property, and ſometimes the life of our neighbour, always tend to diminiſh, and too often to extinguiſh altogether, that ſacred regard to both, which is the foundation of juſtice and humanity. It is

PART III. upon this account, that we ſo frequently find in the world men of great humanity who have little ſelf-command, but who are indolent and irreſolute, and eaſily diſheartened, either by difficulty or danger, from the moſt honourable purſuits; and, on the contrary, men of the moſt perfect ſelf-command, whom no difficulty can diſcourage, no danger appal, and who are at all times ready for the moſt daring and deſperate enterpriſes, but who, at the ſame time, ſeem to be hardened againſt all ſenſe either of juſtice or humanity.

In ſolitude, we are apt to feel too ſtrongly whatever relates to ourſelves: we are apt to over-rate the good offices we may have done, and the injuries we may have ſuffered: we are apt to be too much elated by our own good, and too much dejected by our own bad fortune. The converſation of a friend brings us to a better, that of a ſtranger to a ſtill better temper. The man within the breaſt, the abſtract and ideal ſpectator of our ſentiments and conduct, requires often to be awakened and put in mind of his duty, by the preſence of the real ſpectator: and it is always from that ſpectator, from whom we can expect the leaſt ſympathy and indulgence, that we are likely to learn the moſt complete leſſon of ſelf-command.

Are you in adverſity? Do not mourn in the darkneſs of ſolitude, do not regulate your ſorrow according to the indulgent ſympathy of your intimate friends; return, as ſoon as poſſible, to the day-light of the world and of ſociety.

Live

Live with ſtrangers, with thoſe who know nothing, or care nothing about your misfortune; do not even ſhun the company of enemies; but give yourſelf the pleaſure of mortifying their malignant joy, by making them feel how little you are affected by your calamity, and how much you are above it.

Are you in proſperity? Do not confine the enjoyment of your good fortune to your own houſe, to the company of your own friends, perhaps of your flatterers, of thoſe who build upon your fortune the hopes of mending their own; frequent thoſe who are independent of you, who can value you only for your character and conduct, and not for your fortune. Neither ſeek nor ſhun, neither intrude yourſelf into nor run away from the ſociety of thoſe who were once your ſuperiors, and who may be hurt at finding you their equal, or, perhaps, even their ſuperior. The impertinence of their pride may, perhaps, render their company too diſagreeable: but if it ſhould not, be aſſured that it is the beſt company you can poſſibly keep; and if, by the ſimplicity of your unaſſuming demeanour, you can gain their favour and kindneſs, you may reſt ſatisfied that you are modeſt enough, and that your head has been in no reſpect turned by your good fortune.

The propriety of our moral ſentiments is never ſo apt to be corrupted, as when the indulgent and partial ſpectator is at hand, while the indifferent and impartial one is at a great diſtance.

PART III. Of the conduct of one independent nation towards another, neutral nations are the only indifferent and impartial ſpectators. But they are placed at ſo great a diſtance that they are almoſt quite out of ſight. When two nations are at variance, the citizen of each pays little regard to the ſentiments which foreign nations may entertain concerning his conduct. His whole ambition is to obtain the approbation of his own fellow-citizens; and as they are all animated by the ſame hoſtile paſſions which animate himſelf, he can never pleaſe them ſo much as by enraging and offending their enemies. The partial ſpectator is at hand: the impartial one at a great diſtance. In war and negotiation, therefore, the laws of juſtice are very ſeldom obſerved. Truth and fair dealing are almoſt totally diſregarded. Treaties are violated; and the violation, if ſome advantage is gained by it, ſheds ſcarce any diſhonour upon the violator. The ambaſſador who dupes the miniſter of a foreign nation, is admired and applauded. The juſt man who diſdains either to take or to give any advantage, but who would think it leſs diſhonourable to give than to take one; the man who, in all private tranſactions, would be the moſt beloved and the moſt eſteemed; in thoſe public tranſactions is regarded as a fool and an ideot, who does not underſtand his buſineſs; and he incurs always the contempt, and ſometimes even the deteſtation of his fellow-citizens. In war, not only what are called the laws of nations, are frequently

uently violated, without bringing (among his wn fellow-citizens, whofe judgments he only egards) any confiderable difhonour upon the iolator; but thofe laws themfelves are, the reater part of them, laid down with very little egard to the plaineft and moft obvious rules of iftice. That the innocent, though they may ave fome connexion or dependency upon the uilty (which, perhaps, they themfelves cannot elp), fhould not, upon that account, fuffer or e punifhed for the guilty, is one of the plaineft nd moft obvious rules of juftice. In the moft injuft war, however, it is commonly the fovereign or the rulers only who are guilty. The ubjects are almoft always perfectly innocent. Whenever it fuits the conveniency of a public nemy, however, the goods of the peaceable itizens are feized both at land and at fea; heir lands are laid wafte, their houfes are burnt, nd they themfelves, if they prefume to make ny refiftance, are murdered or led into capivity; and all this in the moft perfect conformity to what are called the laws of nations.

The animofity of hoftile factions, whether civil or ecclefiaftical, is often ftill more furious than that of hoftile nations; and their conduct towards one another is often ftill more atrocious. What may be called the laws of faction have often been laid down by grave authors with ftill lefs regard to the rules of juftice than what are called the laws of nations. The moft ferocious patriot never ftated it as a ferious queftion, Whether faith ought to be kept with public

PART III. enemies? — Whether faith ought to be kept with rebels? Whether faith ought to be kept with heretics? are queſtions which have been often furiouſly agitated by celebrated doctors both civil and eccleſiaſtical. It is needleſs to obſerve, I preſume, that both rebels and heretics are thoſe unlucky perſons, who, when things have come to a certain degree of violence, have the misfortune to be of the weaker party. In a nation diſtracted by faction, there are, no doubt, always a few, though commonly but a very few, who preſerve their judgment untainted by the general contagion. They ſeldom amount to more than, here and there, a ſolitary individual, without any influence, excluded, by his own candour, from the confidence of either party, and who, though he may be one of the wiſeſt, is neceſſarily, upon that very account, one of the moſt inſignificant men in the ſociety. All ſuch people are held in contempt and deriſion, frequently in deteſtation, by the furious zealots of both parties. A true party-man hates and deſpiſes candour; and, in reality, there is no vice which could ſo effectually diſqualify him for the trade of a party-man as that ſingle virtue. The real, revered, and impartial ſpectator, therefore, is, upon no occaſion, at a greater diſtance than amidſt the violence and rage of contending parties. To them, it may be ſaid, that ſuch a ſpectator ſcarce exiſts any where in the univerſe. Even to the great Judge of the univerſe, they impute all their own prejudices, and often view that Divine Being

Being as animated by all their own vindictive and implacable paſſions. Of all the corrupters of moral ſentiments, therefore, faction and fanaticiſm have always been by far the greateſt.

Concerning the ſubject of ſelf-command, I ſhall only obſerve further, that our admiration for the man who, under the heavieſt and moſt unexpected misfortunes, continues to behave with fortitude and firmneſs, always ſuppoſes that his ſenſibility to thoſe misfortunes is very great, and ſuch as it requires a very great effort to conquer or command. The man who was altogether inſenſible to bodily pain, could deſerve no applauſe from enduring the torture with the moſt perfect patience and equanimity. The man who had been created without the natural fear of death, could claim no merit from preſerving his coolneſs and preſence of mind in the midſt of the moſt dreadful dangers. It is one of the extravagancies of Seneca, that the Stoical wiſe man was, in this reſpect, ſuperior even to a God; that the ſecurity of the God was altogether the benefit of nature, which had exempted him from ſuffering; but that the ſecurity of the wiſe man was his own benefit, and derived altogether from himſelf and from his own exertions.

The ſenſibility of ſome men, however, to ſome of the objects which immediately affect themſelves, is ſometimes ſo ſtrong as to render all ſelf-command impoſſible. No ſenſe of honour can control the fears of the man who is weak enough to faint, or to fall into convulſions, upon

PART III.

the approach of danger. Whether ſuch weakneſs of nerves, as it has been called, may not, by gradual exerciſe and proper diſcipline, admit of ſome cure, may, perhaps, be doubtful. It ſeems certain that it ought never to be truſted or employed.

CHAP. IV.

Of the Nature of Self-deceit, and of the Origin and Uſe of general Rules.

CHAP. IV.

IN order to pervert the rectitude of our own judgments concerning the propriety of our own conduct, it is not always neceſſary that the real and impartial ſpectator ſhould be at a great diſtance. When he is at hand, when he is preſent, the violence and injuſtice of our own ſelfiſh paſſions are ſometimes ſufficient to induce the man within the breaſt to make a report very different from what the real circumſtances of the caſe are capable of authoriſing.

There are two different occaſions upon which we examine our own conduct, and endeavour to view it in the light in which the impartial ſpectator would view it: firſt, when we are about to act; and ſecondly, after we have acted. Our views are apt to be very partial in both caſes; but they are apt to be moſt partial when it is of moſt importance that they ſhould be otherwiſe.

When

When we are about to act, the eagerness of passion will seldom allow us to consider what we are doing, with the candour of an indifferent person. The violent emotions which at that time agitate us, discolour our views of things, even when we are endeavouring to place ourselves in the situation of another, and to regard the objects that interest us in the light in which they will naturally appear to him. The fury of our own passions constantly calls us back to our own place, where every thing appears magnified and misrepresented by self-love. Of the manner in which those objects would appear to another, of the view which he would take of them, we can obtain, if I may say so, but instantaneous glimpses, which vanish in a moment, and which, even while they last, are not altogether just. We cannot even for that moment divest ourselves entirely of the heat and keenness with which our peculiar situation inspires us, nor consider what we are about to do with the complete impartiality of an equitable judge. The passions, upon this account, as Father Malebranche says, all justify themselves, and seem reasonable and proportioned to their objects, as long as we continue to feel them.

When the action is over, indeed, and the passions which prompted it have subsided, we can enter more coolly into the sentiments of the indifferent spectator. What before interested us is now become almost as indifferent to us as it always was to him, and we can now examine our own conduct with his candour and impar-

PART III.

tiality. The man of to-day is no longer agitated by the ſame paſſions which diſtracted the man of yeſterday: and when the paroxyſm of emotion, in the ſame manner as when the paroxyſm of diſtreſs, is fairly over, we can identify ourſelves, as it were, with the ideal man within the breaſt, and, in our own character, view, as in the one caſe, our own ſituation, ſo in the other, our own conduct, with the ſevere eyes of the moſt impartial ſpectator. But our judgments now are often of little importance in compariſon of what they were before; and can frequently produce nothing but vain regret and unavailing repentance; without always ſecuring us from the like errors in time to come. It is ſeldom, however, that they are quite candid even in this caſe. The opinion which we entertain of our own character depends entirely on our judgment concerning our paſt conduct. It is ſo diſagreeable to think ill of ourſelves, that we often purpoſely turn away our view from thoſe circumſtances which might render that judgment unfavourable. He is a bold ſurgeon, they ſay, whoſe hand does not tremble when he performs an operation upon his own perſon; and he is often equally bold who does not heſitate to pull off the myſterious veil of ſelf-deluſion, which covers from his view the deformities of his own conduct. Rather than ſee our own behaviour under ſo diſagreeable an aſpect, we too often, fooliſhly and weakly, endeavour to exaſperate anew thoſe unjuſt paſſions which had formerly miſled us; we endeavour by

by artifice to awaken our old hatreds, and irritate afresh our almost forgotten resentments: we even exert ourselves for this miserable purpose, and thus persevere in injustice, merely because we once were unjust, and because we are ashamed and afraid to see that we were so.

So partial are the views of mankind with regard to the propriety of their own conduct, both at the time of action and after it; and so difficult is it for them to view it in the light in which any indifferent spectator would consider it. But if it was by a peculiar faculty, such as the moral sense is supposed to be, that they judged of their own conduct, if they were endued with a particular power of perception, which distinguished the beauty or deformity of passions and affections; as their own passions would be more immediately exposed to the view of this faculty, it would judge with more accuracy concerning them, than concerning those of other men, of which it had only a more distant prospect.

This self-deceit, this fatal weakness of mankind, is the source of half the disorders of human life. If we saw ourselves in the light in which others see us, or in which they would see us if they knew all, a reformation would generally be unavoidable. We could not otherwise endure the sight.

Nature, however, has not left this weakness, which is of so much importance, altogether without a remedy; nor has she abandoned us entirely to the delusions of self-love. Our continual

PART III.

tinual obſervations upon the conduct of others, inſenſibly lead us to form to ourſelves certain general rules concerning what is fit and proper either to be done or to be avoided. Some of their actions ſhock all our natural ſentiments. We hear every body about us expreſs the like deteſtation againſt them. This ſtill further confirms, and even exaſperates our natural ſenſe of their deformity. It ſatisfies us that we view them in the proper light, when we ſee other people view them in the ſame light. We reſolve never to be guilty of the like, nor ever, upon any account, to render ourſelves in this manner the objects of univerſal diſapprobation. We thus naturally lay down to ourſelves a general rule, that all ſuch actions are to be avoided, as tending to render us odious, contemptible, or puniſhable, the objects of all thoſe ſentiments for which we have the greateſt dread and averſion. Other actions, on the contrary, call forth our approbation, and we hear every body around us expreſs the ſame favourable opinion concerning them. Every body is eager to honour and reward them. They excite all thoſe ſentiments for which we have by nature the ſtrongeſt deſire; the love, the gratitude, the admiration of mankind. We become ambitious of performing the like; and thus naturally lay down to ourſelves a rule of another kind, that every opportunity of acting in this manner is carefully to be ſought after.

It is thus that the general rules of morality are formed. They are ultimately founded upon

upon experience of what, in particular inſtances, our moral faculties, our natural ſenſe of merit and propriety, approve, or diſapprove of. We do not originally approve or condemn particular actions; becauſe, upon examination, they appear to be agreeable or inconſiſtent with a certain general rule. The general rule, on the contrary, is formed, by finding from experience, that all actions of a certain kind, or circumſtanced in a certain manner, are approved or diſapproved of. To the man who firſt ſaw an inhuman murder, committed from avarice, envy, or unjuſt reſentment, and upon one too that loved and truſted the murderer, who beheld the laſt agonies of the dying perſon, who heard him, with his expiring breath, complain more of the perfidy and ingratitude of his falſe friend, than of the violence which had been done to him, there could be no occaſion, in order to conceive how horrible ſuch an action was, that he ſhould reflect, that one of the moſt ſacred rules of conduct was what prohibited the taking away the life of an innocent perſon, that this was a plain violation of that rule, and conſequently a very blamable action. His deteſtation of this crime, it is evident, would ariſe inſtantaneouſly and antecedent to his having formed to himſelf any ſuch general rule. The general rule, on the contrary, which he might afterwards form, would be founded upon the deteſtation which he felt neceſſarily ariſe in his own breaſt, at the thought of this, and every other particular action of the ſame kind.

CHAP. IV.

When

PART III.

When we read in hiſtory or romance, the account of actions either of generoſity or of baſeneſs, the admiration which we conceive for the one, and the contempt which we feel for the other, neither of them ariſe from reflecting that there are certain general rules which declare all actions of the one kind admirable, and all actions of the other contemptible. Thoſe general rules, on the contrary, are all formed from the experience we have had of the effects which actions of all different kinds naturally produce upon us.

An amiable action, a reſpectable action, an horrid action, are all of them actions which naturally excite for the perſon who performs them, the love, the reſpect, or the horror of the ſpectator. The general rules which determine what actions are, and what are not, the objects of each of thoſe ſentiments, can be formed no other way than by obſerving what actions actually and in fact excite them.

When theſe general rules, indeed, have been formed, when they are univerſally acknowledged and eſtabliſhed, by the concurring ſentiments of mankind, we frequently appeal to them as to the ſtandards of judgement, in debating concerning the degree of praiſe or blame that is due to certain actions of a complicated and dubious nature. They are upon theſe occaſions commonly cited as the ultimate foundations of what is juſt and unjuſt in human conduct; and this circumſtance ſeems to have miſled ſeveral very eminent authors, to draw up their ſyſtems

in

in ſuch a manner, as if they had ſuppoſed that the original judgments of mankind with regard to right and wrong, were formed like the deciſions of a court of judicatory, by conſidering firſt the general rule, and then, ſecondly, whether the particular action under conſideration fell properly within its comprehenſion.

Thoſe general rules of conduct, when they have been fixed in our mind by habitual reflection, are of great uſe in correcting the miſrepreſentations of ſelf-love concerning what is fit and proper to be done in our particular ſituation. The man of furious reſentment, if he was to liſten to the dictates of that paſſion, would perhaps regard the death of his enemy, as but a ſmall compenſation for the wrong, he imagines, he has received; which, however, may be no more than a very ſlight provocation. But his obſervations upon the conduct of others, have taught him how horrible all ſuch ſanguinary revenges appear. Unleſs his education has been very ſingular, he has laid it down to himſelf as an inviolable rule, to abſtain from them upon all occaſions. This rule preſerves its authority with him, and renders him incapable of being guilty of ſuch a violence. Yet the fury of his own temper may be ſuch, that had this been the firſt time in which he conſidered ſuch an action, he would undoubtedly have determined it to be quite juſt and proper, and what every impartial ſpectator would approve of. But that reverence for the rule which paſt experience has impreſſed upon him, checks the impetuoſity of his paſſion, and

 helps

PART III. helps him to correct the too partial views w
ſelf-love might otherwiſe ſuggeſt, of what
proper to be done in his ſituation. If he ſh
allow himſelf to be ſo far tranſported by pa
as to violate this rule, yet, even in this caſ
cannot throw off altogether the awe an
ſpect with which he has been accuſtome
regard it. At the very time of acting, at
moment in which paſſion mounts the hig
he heſitates and trembles at the though
what he is about to do: he is ſecretly conſc
to himſelf that he is breaking through t
meaſures of conduct which, in all his cool h
he had reſolved never to infringe, which he
never ſeen infringed by others without
higheſt diſapprobation, and of which the infri
ment, his own mind forebodes, muſt ſoon re
him the object of the ſame diſagreeable ſ
ments. Before he can take the laſt fatal re
tion, he is tormented with all the agonie
doubt and uncertainty; he is terrified at
thought of violating ſo ſacred a rule, and a
ſame time is urged and goaded on by the fu
his deſires to violate it. He changes his
poſe every moment; ſometimes he reſolve
adhere to his principle, and not indulge a pa
which may corrupt the remaining part of hi
with the horrors of ſhame and repentance; a
momentary calm takes poſſeſſion of his br
from the proſpect of that ſecurity and t
quillity which he will enjoy when he thus d
mines not to expoſe himſelf to the hazard
contrary conduct. But immediately the pa
ro

ouſes anew, and with freſh fury drives him on o commit what he had the inſtant before re- olved to abſtain from. Wearied and diſtracted vith thoſe continual irreſolutions, he at length, rom a ſort of deſpair, makes the laſt fatal and rrecoverable ſtep; but with that terror and mazement with which one flying from an nemy, throws himſelf over a precipice, where e is ſure of meeting with more certain de- truction than from any thing that purſues him rom behind. Such are his ſentiments even at he time of acting; though he is then, no doubt, eſs ſenſible of the impropriety of his own con- uct than afterwards, when his paſſion being gratified and palled, he begins to view what he as done in the light in which others are apt to iew it; and actually feels, what he had only foreſeen very imperfectly before, the ſtings of remorſe and repentance begin to agitate and torment him.

CHAP. IV.

CHAP. V.

Of the influence and authority of the general Rules of Morality, and that they are juſtly regarded as the Laws of the Deity.

THE regard to thoſe general rules of conduct, is what is properly called a ſenſe of duty, a principle of the greateſt conſequence in

CHAP. V.

PART III. human life, and the only principle by which the bulk of mankind are capable of directing their actions. Many men behave very decently, and through the whole of their lives avoid any considerable degree of blame, who yet, perhaps, never felt the sentiment upon the propriety of which we found our approbation of their conduct, but acted merely from a regard to what they saw were the established rules of behaviour. The man who has received great benefits from another person, may, by the natural coldness of his temper, feel but a very small degree of the sentiment of gratitude. If he has been virtuously educated, however, he will often have been made to observe how odious those actions appear which denote a want of this sentiment, and how amiable the contrary. Though his heart therefore is not warmed with any grateful affection, he will strive to act as if it was, and will endeavour to pay all those regards and attentions to his patron which the liveliest gratitude could suggest. He will visit him regularly; he will behave to him respectfully; he will never talk of him but with expressions of the highest esteem, and of the many obligations which he owes to him. And what is more, he will carefully embrace every opportunity of making a proper return for past services. He may do all this too without any hypocrisy or blamable dissimulation, without any selfish intention of obtaining new favours, and without any design of imposing either upon his benefactor or the public. The motive of his actions may be

no

no other than a reverence for the eſtabliſhed rule of duty, a ſerious and earneſt deſire of acting, in every reſpect, according to the law of gratitude. A wife, in the ſame manner, may ſometimes not feel that tender regard for her huſband which is ſuitable to the relation that ſubſiſts between them. If ſhe has been virtuouſly educated, however, ſhe will endeavour to act as if ſhe felt it, to be careful, officious, faithful, and ſincere, and to be deficient in none of thoſe attentions which the ſentiment of conjugal affection could have prompted her to perform. Such a friend, and ſuch a wife, are neither of them, undoubtedly, the very beſt of their kinds; and though both of them may have the moſt ſerious and earneſt deſire to fulfil every part of their duty, yet they will fail in many nice and delicate regards, they will miſs many opportunities of obliging, which they could never have overlooked if they had poſſeſſed the ſentiment that is proper to their ſituation. Though not the very firſt of their kinds, however, they are perhaps the ſecond; and if the regard to the general rules of conduct has been very ſtrongly impreſſed upon them, neither of them will fail in any very eſſential part of their duty. None but thoſe of the happieſt mould are capable of ſuiting, with exact juſtneſs, their ſentiments and behaviour to the ſmalleſt difference of ſituation, and of acting upon all occaſions with the moſt delicate and accurate propriety. The coarſe clay of which the bulk of mankind are formed, cannot be wrought up to ſuch perfection.

PART III. There is ſcarce any man, however, who by diſcipline, education, and example, may not be ſo impreſſed with a regard to general rules, as to act upon almoſt every occaſion with tolerable decency, and through the whole of his life to avoid any conſiderable degree of blame.

Without this ſacred regard to general rules, there is no man whoſe conduct can be much depended upon. It is this which conſtitutes the moſt eſſential difference between a man of principle and honour and a worthleſs fellow. The one adheres, on all occaſions, ſteadily and reſolutely to his maxims, and preſerves through the whole of his life one even tenour of conduct. The other, acts variouſly and accidentally, as humour, inclination, or intereſt chance to be uppermoſt. Nay, ſuch are the inequalities of humour to which all men are ſubject, that without this principle, the man who, in all his cool hours, had the moſt delicate ſenſibility to the propriety of conduct, might often be led to act abſurdly upon the moſt frivolous occaſions, and when it was ſcarce poſſible to aſſign any ſerious motive for his behaving in this manner. Your friend makes you a viſit when you happen to be in a humour which makes it diſagreeable to receive him: in your preſent mood his civility is very apt to appear an impertinent intruſion; and if you were to give way to the views of things which at this time occur, though civil in your temper, you would behave to him with coldneſs and contempt. What renders you incapable of ſuch a rudeneſs, is nothing but a regard to the general

general rules of civility and hospitality, which prohibit it. That habitual reverence which your former experience has taught you for these, enables you to act, upon all such occasions, with nearly equal propriety, and hinders those inequalities of temper, to which all men are subject, from influencing your conduct in any very sensible degree. But if without regard to these general rules, even the duties of politeness, which are so easily observed, and which one can scarce have any serious motive to violate, would yet be so frequently violated, what would become of the duties of justice, of truth, of chastity, of fidelity, which it is often so difficult to observe, and which there may be so many strong motives to violate? But upon the tolerable observance of these duties, depends the very existence of human society, which would crumble into nothing if mankind were not generally impressed with a reverence for those important rules of conduct.

This reverence is still further enhanced by an opinion which is first impressed by nature, and afterwards confirmed by reasoning and philosophy, that those important rules of morality are the commands and laws of the Deity, who will finally reward the obedient and punish the transgressors of their duty.

This opinion or apprehension, I say, seems first to be impressed by nature. Men are naturally led to ascribe to those mysterious beings, whatever they are, which happen, in any country to be the objects of religious fear, all their own

PART III.

ſentiments and paſſions. They have no other, they can conceive no other to aſcribe to them. Thoſe unknown intelligences which they imagine but ſee not, muſt neceſſarily be formed with ſome ſort of reſemblance to thoſe intelligences of which they have experience. During the ignorance and darkneſs of pagan ſuperſtition, mankind ſeem to have formed the ideas of their divinities with ſo little delicacy, that they aſcribed to them, indiſcriminately, all the paſſions of human nature, thoſe not excepted which do the leaſt honour to our ſpecies, ſuch as luſt, hunger, avarice, envy, revenge. They could not fail, therefore, to aſcribe to thoſe beings, for the excellence of whoſe nature they ſtill conceived the higheſt admiration, thoſe ſentiments and qualities which are the great ornaments of humanity, and which ſeem to raiſe it to a reſemblance of divine perfection, the love of virtue and beneficence, and the abhorrence of vice and injuſtice. The man who was injured, called upon Jupiter to be witneſs of the wrong that was done to him, and could not doubt, but that divine being would behold it with the ſame indignation which would animate the meaneſt of mankind, who looked on when injuſtice was committed. The man who did the injury, felt himſelf to be the proper object of the deteſtation and reſentment of mankind; and his natural fears led him to impute the ſame ſentiments to thoſe awful beings, whoſe preſence he could not avoid, and whoſe power he could not reſiſt. Theſe natural hopes and fears, and ſuſpicions,

were

s propagated by ſympathy, and confirmed education; and the gods were univerſally eſented and believed to be the rewarders of anity and mercy, and the avengers of per- and injuſtice. And thus religion, even in udeſt form, gave a ſanction to the rules of ality, long before the age of artificial reaſon- and philoſophy. That the terrors of religion ıld thus enforce the natural ſenſe of duty, of too much importance to the happineſs of ıkind, for nature to leave it dependent upon ſlowneſs and uncertainty of philoſophical arches.

heſe reſearches, however, when they came ake place, confirmed thoſe original anticipa- s of nature. Upon whatever we ſuppoſe our moral faculties are founded, whether n a certain modification of reaſon, upon an inal inſtinct, called a moral ſenſe, or upon e other principle of our nature, it cannot be bted, that they were given us for the direc- of our conduct in this life. They carry g with them the moſt evident badges of this ıority, which denote that they were ſet up in us to be the ſupreme arbiters of all our ons, to ſuperintend all our ſenſes, paſſions, appetites, and to judge how far each of them either to be indulged or reſtrained. Our al faculties are by no means, as ſome have tended, upon a level in this reſpect with the er faculties and appetites of our nature, en- ted with no more right to reſtrain theſe laſt, n theſe laſt are to reſtrain them. No other faculty

PART III. faculty or principle of action judges of any other. Love does not judge of resentment, nor resentment of love. Those two passions may be opposite to one another, but cannot, with any propriety, be said to approve or disapprove of one another. But it is the peculiar office of those faculties now under our consideration to judge, to bestow censure or applause upon all the other principles of our nature. They may be considered as a sort of senses of which those principles are the objects. Every sense is supreme over its own objects. There is no appeal from the eye with regard to the beauty of colours, nor from the ear with regard to the harmony of sounds, nor from the taste with regard to the agreeableness of flavours. Each of those senses judges in the last resort of its own objects. Whatever gratifies the taste is sweet, whatever pleases the eye is beautiful, whatever soothes the ear is harmonious. The very essence of each of those qualities consists in its being fitted to please the sense to which it is addressed. It belongs to our moral faculties, in the same manner to determine when the ear ought to be soothed, when the eye ought to be indulged, when the taste ought to be gratified, when and how far every other principle of our nature ought either to be indulged or restrained. What is agreeable to our moral faculties, is fit, and right, and proper to be done; the contrary wrong, unfit, and improper. The sentiments which they approve of, are graceful and becoming: the contrary, ungraceful and unbecoming. The very words, right, wrong, fit, improper,

improper, graceful, unbecoming, mean only that pleases or displeases those faculties.

Since these, therefore, were plainly intended to be the governing principles of human nature, the rules which they prescribe are to be regarded as the commands and laws of the Deity, promulgated by those vicegerents which he has thus set up within us. All general rules are commonly denominated laws: thus the general rules which bodies observe in the communication of motion, are called the laws of motion. But those general rules which our moral faculties observe in approving or condemning whatever sentiment or action is subjected to their examination, may much more justly be denominated such. They have a much greater resemblance to what are properly called laws, those general rules which the sovereign lays down to direct the conduct of his subjects. Like them they are rules to direct the free actions of men: they are prescribed most purely by a lawful superior, and are attended too with the sanction of rewards and punishments. Those vicegerents of God within us, never fail to punish the violation of them, by the torments of inward shame, and self-condemnation; and on the contrary, always reward obedience with tranquillity of mind, with contentment and self-satisfaction.

There are innumerable other considerations which serve to confirm the same conclusion. The happiness of mankind, as well as of all other rational creatures, seems to have been the original purpose intended by the author of nature, when

PART III.

when he brought them into exiſtence. No other end ſeems worthy of that ſupreme wiſdom and divine benignity which we neceſſarily aſcribe to him; and this opinion, which we are led to by the abſtract conſideration of his infinite perfections, is ſtill more confirmed by the examination of the works of nature, which ſeem all intended to promote happineſs, and to guard against miſery. But by acting according to the dictates of our moral faculties, we neceſſarily purſue the moſt effectual means for promoting the happineſs of mankind, and may therefore be ſaid, in ſome ſenſe, to co-operate with the Deity, and to advance as far as in our power the plan of Providence. By acting otherways, on the contrary, we ſeem to obſtruct, in ſome meaſure, the ſcheme which the Author of nature has eſtabliſhed for the happineſs and perfection of the world, and to declare ourſelves, if I may ſay ſo, in ſome meaſure the enemies of God. Hence we are naturally encouraged to hope for his extraordinary favour and reward in the one caſe, and to dread his vengeance and puniſhment in the other.

There are beſides many other reaſons, and many other natural principles, which all tend to confirm and inculcate the ſame ſalutary doctrine. If we conſider the general rules by which external proſperity and adverſity are commonly diſtributed in this life, we ſhall find, that notwithſtanding the diſorder in which all things appear to be in this world, yet even here every virtue naturally meets with its proper reward, with

with the recompence which is moſt fit to encourage and promote it; and this too ſo ſurely, that it requires a very extraordinary concurrence of circumſtances entirely to diſappoint it. What is the reward moſt proper for encouraging induſtry, prudence, and circumſpection? Succeſs in every ſort of buſineſs. And is it poſſible that in the whole of life theſe virtues ſhould fail of attaining it? Wealth and external honours are their proper recompenſe, and the recompenſe which they can ſeldom fail of acquiring. What reward is moſt proper for promoting the practice of truth, juſtice, and humanity? The confidence, the eſteem, and love of thoſe we live with. Humanity does not deſire to be great, but to be beloved. It is not in being rich that truth and juſtice would rejoice, but in being truſted and believed, recompenſes which thoſe virtues muſt almoſt always acquire. By ſome very extraordinary and unlucky circumſtance, a good man may come to be ſuſpected of a crime of which he was altogether incapable, and upon that account be moſt unjuſtly expoſed for the remaining part of his life to the horror and averſion of mankind. By an accident of this kind he may be ſaid to loſe his all, notwithſtanding his integrity and juſtice; in the ſame manner as a cautious man, notwithſtanding his utmoſt circumſpection, may be ruined by an earthquake or an inundation. Accidents of the firſt kind, however, are perhaps ſtill more rare, and ſtill more contrary to the common courſe of things than thoſe of the ſecond; and it ſtill remains true, that

PART III.

that the practice of truth, juſt and humani is a certain and almoſt infallible method of a quiring what thoſe virtues chiefly aim at, t confidence and love of thoſe we live with. perſon may be very eaſily miſrepreſented wi regard to a particular action; but it is ſcar poſſible that he ſhould be ſo with regard to t general tenor of his conduct. An innocent m may be believed to have done wrong: this, ho ever, will rarely happen. On the contrary, t eſtabliſhed opinion of the innocence of his ma ners, will often lead us to abſolve him where has really been in the fault, notwithſtandi very ſtrong preſumptions. A knave, in the ſa manner, may eſcape cenſure, or even meet wi applauſe, for a particular knavery, in which conduct is not underſtood. But no man w ever habitually ſuch, without being almoſt u verſally known to be ſo, and without being ev frequently ſuſpected of guilt, when he was reality perfectly innocent. And ſo far as vi and virtue can be either puniſhed or reward by the ſentiments and opinions of mankind, th both, according to the common courſe of thing meet even here with ſomething more than ex and impartial juſtice.

But though the general rules by which pr perity and adverſity are commonly diſtribute when conſidered in this cool and philoſophic light, appear to be perfectly ſuited to the ſitu tion of mankind in this life, yet they are by n means ſuited to ſome of our natural ſentiment Our natural love and admiration for ſome vi

tu

tues is ſuch, that we ſhould wiſh to beſtow on them all ſorts of honours and rewards, even thoſe which we muſt acknowledge to be the proper recompenſes of other qualities, with which thoſe virtues are not always accompanied. Our deteſtation, on the contrary, for ſome vices is ſuch, that we ſhould deſire to heap upon them every ſort of diſgrace and diſaſter, thoſe not excepted which are the natural conſequences of very different qualities. Magnanimity, generoſity, and juſtice, command ſo high a degree of admiration, that we deſire to ſee them crowned with wealth, and power, and honours of every kind, the natural conſequences of prudence, induſtry, and application; qualities with which thoſe virtues are not inſeparably connected. Fraud, falſehood, brutality, and violence, on the other hand, excite in every human breaſt ſuch ſcorn and abhorrence, that our indignation rouſes to ſee them poſſeſs thoſe advantages which they may in ſome ſenſe be ſaid to have merited, by the diligence and induſtry with which they are ſometimes attended. The induſtrious knave cultivates the ſoil; the indolent good man leaves it uncultivated. Who ought to reap the harveſt? Who ſtarve, and who live in plenty? The natural courſe of things decides it in favour of the knave: the natural ſentiments of mankind in favour of the man of virtue. Man judges, that the good qualities of the one are greatly over-recompenſed by thoſe advantages which they tend to procure him, and that the omiſſions of the other are by far too ſeverely puniſhed by

PART III. the diſtreſs which they naturally bring u him; and human laws, the conſequence human ſentiments, forfeit the life and the e of the induſtrious and cautious traitor, reward, by extraordinary recompenſes, fidelity and public ſpirit of the improvident careleſs good citizen. Thus man is by Nat directed to correct, in ſome meaſure, that tribution of things which ſhe herſelf wo otherwiſe have made. The rules which for purpoſe ſhe prompts him to follow, are differ from thoſe which ſhe herſelf obſerves. beſtows upon every virtue, and upon every that preciſe reward or puniſhment which is fitted to encourage the one, or to reſtrain other. She is directed by this ſole conſide tion, and pays little regard to the different grees of merit and demerit, which they ſeem to poſſeſs in the ſentiments and paſſions man. Man, on the contrary, pays regard this only, and would endeavour to render t ſtate of every virtue preciſely proportioned that degree of love and eſteem, and of eve vice to that degree of contempt and abhorren which he himſelf conceives for it. The ru which ſhe follows are fit for her, thoſe which follows for him: but both are calculated to pr mote the ſame great end, the order of t world, and the perfection and happineſs of h man nature.

But though man is thus employed to alt that diſtribution of things which natural even would make, if left to themſelves; though, li the gods of the poets, he is perpetually interp

g, by extraordinary means, in favour of virtue, id in oppofition to vice, and, like them, en- eavours to turn away the arrow that is aimed the head of the righteous, but to accelerate the word of deftruction that is lifted up againft the icked; yet he is by no means able to render the rtune of either quite fuitable to his own fenti- ents and wifhes. The natural courfe of things annot be entirely controlled by the impotent ndeavours of man: the current is too rapid nd too ftrong for him to ftop it; and though he rules which direct it appear to have been ftablifhed for the wifeft and beft purpofes, they ometimes produce effects which fhock all his atural fentiments. That a great combination of men fhould prevail over a fmall one; that thofe who engage in an enterprife with fore- thought and all neceffary preparation, fhould prevail over fuch as oppofe them without any; and that every end fhould be acquired by thofe means only which nature has eftablifhed for ac- quiring it, feems to be a rule not only neceffary and unavoidable in itfelf, but even ufeful and proper for roufing the induftry and attention of mankind. Yet, when, in confequence of this rule, violence and artifice prevail over fincerity and juftice, what indignation does it not excite in the breaft of every human fpectator? What forrow and compaffion for the fufferings of the innocent, and what furious refentment againft the fuccefs of the oppreffor? We are equally grieved and enraged at the wrong that is done, but often find it altogether out of our power to

PART III. redreſs it. When we thus deſpair of finding any force upon earth which can check the triumph of injuſtice, we naturally appeal to heaven, and hope, that the great Author of our nature will himſelf execute hereafter what all the principles which he has given us for the direction of our conduct, prompt us to attempt even here; that he will complete the plan which he himſelf has thus taught us to begin; and will, in a life to come, render to every one according to the works which he has performed in this world. And thus we are led to the belief of a future ſtate, not only by the weakneſſes, by the hopes and fears of human nature, but by the nobleſt and beſt principles which belong to it, by the love of virtue, and by the abhorrence of vice and injuſtice.

"Does it ſuit the greatneſs of God," ſays the eloquent and philoſophical biſhop of Clermont, with that paſſionate and exaggerating force of imagination, which ſeems ſometimes to exceed the bounds of decorum; "does it ſuit "the greatneſs of God, to leave the world "which he has created in ſo univerſal a diſ-"order? To ſee the wicked prevail almoſt "always over the juſt; the innocent dethroned "by the uſurper; the father become the victim "of the ambition of an unnatural ſon; the huſ-"band expiring under the ſtroke of a barbarous "and faithleſs wife? From the height of his "greatneſs ought God to behold thoſe melan-"choly events as a fantaſtical amuſement, with-"out taking any ſhare in them? Becauſe he is

"great,

'great, ſhould he be weak, or unjuſt, or barbarous? Becauſe men are little, ought they to be allowed either to be diſſolute without puniſhment, or virtuous without reward? O God! if this is the character of your Supreme Being; if it is you whom we adore under ſuch dreadful ideas; I can no longer acknowledge you for my father, for my protector, for the comforter of my ſorrow, the ſupport of my weakneſs, the rewarder of my fidelity. You would then be no more than an indolent and fantaſtical tyrant, who ſacrifices mankind to his inſolent vanity, and who has brought them out of nothing, only to make them ſerve for the ſport of his leiſure and of his caprice."

When the general rules which determine the merit and demerit of actions, come thus to be regarded as the laws of an All-powerful Being, who watches over our conduct, and who, in a life to come, will reward the obſervance, and puniſh the breach of them; they neceſſarily acquire a new ſacredneſs from this conſideration. That our regard to the will of the Deity ought to be the ſupreme rule of our conduct, can be doubted of by nobody who believes his exiſtence. The very thought of diſobedience appears to involve in it the moſt ſhocking impropriety. How vain, how abſurd would it be for man, either to oppoſe or to neglect the commands that were laid upon him by Infinite Wiſdom, and Infinite Power! How unnatural, how impiouſly ungrateful not to reverence the precepts that were preſcribed to him by the infinite goodneſs of his Creator, even

PART III. though no punishment was to follow their violation. The sense of propriety too is here well supported by the strongest motives of self-interest. The idea that, however we may escape the observation of man, or be placed above the reach of human punishment, yet we are always acting under the eye, and exposed to the punishment of God, the great avenger of injustice, is a motive capable of restraining the most headstrong passions, with those at least who, by constant reflection, have rendered it familiar to them.

It is in this manner that religion enforces the natural sense of duty: and hence it is, that mankind are generally disposed to place great confidence in the probity of those who seem deeply impressed with religious sentiments. Such persons, they imagine, act under an additional tie, besides those which regulate the conduct of other men. The regard to the propriety of action, as well as to reputation, the regard to the applause of his own breast, as well as to that of others, are motives which they suppose have the influence over the religious man, as over the man of the world. But the former lies under another restraint, and never acts deliberately but as in the presence of that Great Superior who is finally to recompense him according to his deeds. A greater trust is reposed, upon this account, in the regularity and exactness of his conduct. And wherever the natural principles of religion are not corrupted by the factious and party zeal of some worthless cabal; wherever the first duty which it requires, is to fulfil all the obligations of

of morality; wherever men are not taught to regard frivolous obſervances, as more immediate duties of religion, than acts of juſtice and beneficence; and to imagine, that by ſacrifices, and ceremonies, and vain ſupplications, they can bargain with the Deity for fraud, and perfidy, and violence, the world undoubtedly judges right in this reſpect, and juſtly places a double confidence in the rectitude of the religious man's behaviour. CHAP. V.

CHAP. VI.

In what caſes the Senſe of Duty ought to be the ſole principle of our conduct; and in what caſes it ought to concur with other motives.

RELIGION affords ſuch ſtrong motives to the practice of virtue, and guards us by ſuch powerful reſtraints from the temptations of vice, that many have been led to ſuppoſe, that religious principles were the ſole laudable motives of action. We ought neither, they ſaid, to reward from gratitude, nor puniſh from reſentment; we ought neither to protect the helpleſsneſs of our children, nor afford ſupport to the infirmities of our parents, from natural affection. All affections for particular objects, ought to be extinguiſhed in our breaſt, and one great affection take the place of all others, the love of the CHAP. VI.

PART III. Deity, the defire of rendering ourfelves agreeable to him, and of directing our conduct, in every refpect, according to his will. We ought not to be grateful from gratitude, we ought not to be charitable from humanity, we ought not to be public-fpirited from the love of our country, nor generous and juft from the love of mankind. The fole principle and motive of our conduct in the performance of all thofe different duties, ought to be a fenfe that God has commanded us to perform them. I fhall not at prefent take time to examine this opinion particularly; I fhall only obferve, that we fhould not have expected to have found it entertained by any fect, who profeffed themfelves of a religion in which, as it is the firft precept to love the Lord our God with all our heart, with all our foul, and with all our ftrength, fo it is the fecond to love our neighbour as we love ourfelves; and we love ourfelves furely for our own fakes, and not merely becaufe we are commanded to do fo. That the fenfe of duty fhould be the fole principle of our conduct, is no where the precept of Chriftianity; but that it fhould be the ruling and the governing one, as philofophy, and as, indeed, common fenfe directs. It may be a queftion, however, in what cafes our actions ought to arife chiefly or entirely from a fenfe of duty, or from a regard to general rules; and in what cafes fome other fentiment or affection ought to concur, and have a principal influence.

The decifion of this queftion, which cannot, perhaps, be given with any very great accuracy, will

will depend upon two different circumſtances; irſt, upon the natural agreeableneſs or deformity of the ſentiment or affection which would prompt us to any action independent of all regard to general rules; and, ſecondly, upon the precision and exactneſs, or the looſeneſs and inaccuracy, of the general rules themſelves.

I. Firſt, I ſay, it will depend upon the natural agreeableneſs or deformity of the affection itſelf, how far our actions ought to ariſe from it, or entirely proceed from a regard to the general rule.

All thoſe graceful and admired actions, to which the benevolent affections would prompt us, ought to proceed as much from the paſſions themſelves, as from any regard to the general rules of conduct. A benefactor thinks himſelf not ill requited, if the perſon upon whom he has beſtowed his good offices, repays them merely from a cold ſenſe of duty, and without any affection to his perſon. A huſband is diſſatisfied with the moſt obedient wife, when he imagines her conduct is animated by no other principle beſides her regard to what the relation ſhe ſtands in requires. Though a ſon ſhould fail in none of the offices of filial duty, yet if he wants that affectionate reverence which it ſo well becomes him to feel, the parent may juſtly complain of his indifference. Nor could a ſon be quite ſatisfied with a parent who, though he performed all the duties of his ſituation, had nothing of that fatherly kindneſs which might have been expected from him. With regard to all ſuch benevolent and

ſocial affections, it is agreeable to ſee the ſenſe of duty employed rather to reſtrain than to enliven them, rather to hinder us from doing too much, than to prompt us to do what we ought. It gives us pleaſure to ſee a father obliged to check his own fondneſs, a friend obliged to ſet bounds to his natural generoſity, a perſon who has received a benefit, obliged to reſtrain the too ſanguine gratitude of his own temper.

The contrary maxim takes place with regard to the malevolent and unſocial paſſions. We ought to reward from the gratitude and generoſity of our own hearts, without any reluctance, and without being obliged to reflect how great the propriety of rewarding: but we ought always to puniſh with reluctance, and more from a ſenſe of the propriety of puniſhing, than from any ſavage diſpoſition to revenge. Nothing is more graceful than the behaviour of the man who appears to reſent the greateſt injuries, more from a ſenſe that they deſerve, and are the proper objects of reſentment, than from feeling himſelf the furies of that diſagreeable paſſion; who, like a judge, conſiders only the general rule, which determines what vengeance is due for each particular offence; who, in executing that rule, feels leſs for what himſelf has ſuffered, than for what the offender is about to ſuffer; who, though in wrath, remembers mercy, and is diſpoſed to interpret the rule in the moſt gentle and favourable manner, and to allow all the alleviations which the moſt candid humanity could, conſiſtently with good ſenſe, admit of.

As

As the ſelfiſh paſſions, according to what has ormerly been obſerved, hold, in other reſpects, ſort of middle place, between the ſocial and nſocial affections, ſo do they likewiſe in this. he purſuit of the objects of private intereſt, in ll common, little, and ordinary caſes, ought to low rather from a regard to the general rules hich preſcribe ſuch conduct, than from any aſſion for the objects themſelves; but upon ome important and extraordinary occaſions, it ſhould be awkward, inſipid, and ungraceful, f the objects themſelves did not appear to animate us with a conſiderable degree of paſſion. o be anxious, or to be laying a plot either to ain or to ſave a ſingle ſhilling, would degrade he moſt vulgar tradeſman in the opinion of all is neighbours. Let his circumſtances be ever mean, no attention to any ſuch ſmall matters, r the ſake of the things themſelves, muſt ppear in his conduct. His ſituation may require e moſt ſevere œconomy and the moſt exact iduity: but each particular exertion of that conomy and aſſiduity muſt proceed, not ſo much om a regard for that particular ſaving or gain, for the general rule which to him preſcribes, ith the utmoſt rigour, ſuch a tenor of conduct. is parſimony to-day muſt not ariſe from a eſire of the particular three-pence which he ill ſave by it, nor his attendance in his ſhop om a paſſion for the particular ten-pence which e will acquire by it: both the one and the ther ought to proceed ſolely from a regard to e general rule, which preſcribes, with the moſt unrelenting

PART III. unrelenting ſeverity, this plan of conduct to all ſons in his way of life. In this conſiſts the difference between the character of a miſer and that of a perſon of exact œconomy and aſſiduity. The one is anxious about ſmall matters for their own ſake; the other attends to them only in conſequence of the ſcheme of life which he has laid down to himſelf.

It is quite otherwiſe with regard to the more extraordinary and important objects of ſelf-intereſt. A perſon appears mean-ſpirited, who does not purſue theſe with ſome degree of earneſtneſs for their own ſake. We ſhould deſpiſe a prince who was not anxious about conquering or defending a province. We ſhould have little reſpect for a private gentleman who did not exert himſelf to gain an eſtate, or even a conſiderable office, when he could acquire them without either meanneſs or injuſtice. A member of parliament who ſhews no keenneſs about his own election, is abandoned by his friends, as altogether unworthy of their attachment. Even a tradeſman is thought a poor-ſpirited fellow among his neighbours, who does not beſtir himſelf to get what they call an extraordinary job, or ſome uncommon advantage. This ſpirit and keenneſs conſtitutes the difference between the man of enterpriſe and the man of dull regularity. Thoſe great objects of ſelf-intereſt, of which the loſs or acquiſition quite changes the rank of the perſon, are the objects of the paſſion properly called ambition; a paſſion, which when it keeps within the bounds of prudence and juſtice, is always

ays admired in the world, and has even etimes a certain irregular greatneſs, which zles the imagination, when it paſſes the its of both theſe virtues, and is not only uſt but extravagant. Hence the general miration for heroes and conquerors, and even ſtateſmen, whoſe projects have been very ing and extenſive though altogether devoid juſtice, ſuch as thoſe of the Cardinals of [illegible] and of Retz. The objects of avarice [illegible]bition differ only in their greatneſs. miſer is as furious about a halfpenny, as nan of ambition about the conqueſt of a gdom.

II. Secondly, I ſay, it will depend partly n the preciſion and exactneſs, or the looſe- s and inaccuracy of the general rules them- es, how far our conduct ought to proceed irely from a regard to them.

The general rules of almoſt all the virtues, general rules which determine what are the ces of prudence, of charity, of generoſity, of titude, of friendſhip, are in many reſpects ſe and inaccurate, admit of many exceptions, l require ſo many modifications, that it is rce poſſible to regulate our conduct entirely a regard to them. The common proverbial xims of prudence, being founded in univerſal erience, are perhaps the beſt general rules ich can be given about it. To affect, how- r, a very ſtrict and literal adherence to them uld evidently be the moſt abſurd and ridi- ous pedantry. Of all the virtues I have juſt w mentioned, gratitude is that, perhaps, of which

PART III.

which the rules are the moſt preciſe, and admit of the feweſt exceptions. That as ſoon as we can we ſhould make a return of equal, and if poſſible of ſuperior value to the ſervices we have received, would ſeem to be a pretty plain rule, and one which admitted of ſcarce any exceptions. Upon the moſt ſuperficial examination, however, this rule will appear to be in the higheſt degree loſe and inaccurate, and to admit of ten thouſand exceptions. If your benefactor attended you in your ſickneſs, ought you to attend him in his? or can you fulfil the obligation of gratitude, by making a return of a different kind? If you ought to attend him, how long ought you to attend him? The ſame time which he attended you, or longer, and how much longer? If your friend lent you money in your diſtreſs, ought you to lend him money in his? How much ought you to lend him? When ought you to lend him? Now, or to-morrow, or next month? And for how long a time? It is evident, that no general rule can be laid down, by which a preciſe anſwer can, in all caſes, be given to any of theſe queſtions. The difference between his character and yours, between his circumſtances and yours, may be ſuch, that you may be perfectly grateful, and juſtly refuſe to lend him a half-penny: and, on the contrary, you may be willing to lend, or even to give him ten times the ſum which he lent you, and yet juſtly be accuſed of the blackeſt ingratitude, and of not having fulfilled the hundredth part of the obligation you lie under. As the duties of gratitude, however, are perhaps the moſt ſacred

of

of all those which the beneficent virtues prescribe to us, so the general rules which determine them are, as I said before, the most accurate. Those which ascertain the actions required by friendship, humanity, hospitality, generosity, are still more vague and indeterminate.

There is, however, one virtue of which the general rules determine with the greatest exactness every external action which it requires. This virtue is justice. The rules of justice are accurate in the highest degree, and admit of no exceptions or modifications, but such as may be ascertained as accurately as the rules themselves, and which generally, indeed, flow from the very same principles with them. If I owe a man ten pounds, justice requires that I should precisely pay him ten pounds, either at the time agreed upon, or when he demands it. What I ought to perform, how much I ought to perform, when and where I ought to perform it, the whole nature and circumstances of the action prescribed, are all of them precisely fixt and determined. Though it may be awkward and pedantic, therefore, to affect too strict an adherence to the common rules of prudence or generosity, there is no pedantry in sticking fast by the rules of justice. On the contrary, the most sacred regard is due to them; and the actions which this virtue requires are never so properly performed, as when the chief motive for performing them is a reverential and religious regard to those general rules which require them. In the practice of the other virtues, our conduct should

PART III. rather be directed by a certain idea of propriety, by a certain taste for a particular tenor of conduct, than by any regard to a precise maxim or rule; and we should consider the end and foundation of the rule, more than the rule itself. But it is otherwise with regard to justice: the man who in that refines the least, and adheres with the most obstinate stedfastness to the general rules themselves, is the most commendable, and the most to be depended upon. Though the end of the rules of justice be, to hinder us from hurting our neighbour, it may frequently be a crime to violate them, though we could pretend with some pretext of reason, that this particular violation could do no hurt. A man often becomes a villain the moment he begins, even in his own heart, to chicane in this manner. The moment he thinks of departing from the most staunch and positive adherence to what those inviolable precepts prescribe to him, he is no longer to be trusted, and no man can say what degree of guilt he may not arrive at. The thief imagines he does no evil, when he steals from the rich, what he supposes they may easily want, and what possibly they may never even know has been stolen from them. The adulterer imagines he does no evil, when he corrupts the wife of his friend, provided he covers his intrigue from the suspicion of the husband, and does not disturb the peace of the family. When once we begin to give way to such refinements, there is no enormity so gross of which we may not be capable.

The

The rules of juſtice may be compared to the ıles of grammar; the rules of the other vir- ıes, to the rules which critics lay down for ıe attainment of what is ſublime and elegant ı compoſition. The one, are preciſe, accu- ıte, and indiſpenſable. The other, are looſe, ıgue, and indeterminate, and preſent us rather ith a general idea of the perfection we ought ı aim at, than afford us any certain and infal- ıble directions for acquiring it. A man may ırn to write grammatically by rule, with the ıoſt abſolute infallibility; and ſo, perhaps, he ıy be taught to act juſtly. But there are no ıles whoſe obſervance will infallibly lead us to ıe attainment of elegance or ſublimity in writ- ıg; though there are ſome which may help us, ı ſome meaſure, to correct and aſcertain the ıgue ideas which we might otherwiſe have ıtertained of thoſe perfections. And there ıe no rules by the knowledge of which we can ıfallibly be taught to act upon all occaſions ith prudence, with juſt magnanimity, or pro- ıer beneficence: though there are ſome which ıy enable us to correct and aſcertain, in ſeve- ıl reſpects, the imperfect ideas which we might ıherwiſe have entertained of thoſe virtues.

It may ſometimes happen, that with the moſt ırious and earneſt deſire of acting ſo as to ıeſerve approbation, we may miſtake the pro- ıer rules of conduct, and thus be miſled by ıat very principle which ought to direct us. ı is in vain to expect, that in this caſe mankind ıould entirely approve of our behaviour. They

PART III. cannot enter into that abſurd idea of duty which influenced us, nor go along with any of the actions which follow from it. There is ſtill, however, ſomething reſpectable in the character and behaviour of one who is thus betrayed into vice, by a wrong ſenſe of duty, or by what is called an erroneous conſcience. How fatally ſoever he may be miſled by it, he is ſtill, with the generous and humane, more the object of commiſeration than of hatred or reſentment. They lament the weakneſs of human nature, which expoſes us to ſuch unhappy deluſions, even while we are moſt ſincerely labouring after perfection, and endeavouring to act according to the beſt principle which can poſſibly direct us. Falſe notions of religion are almoſt the only cauſes which can occaſion any very groſs perverſion of our natural ſentiments in this way; and that principle which gives the greateſt authority to the rules of duty, is alone capable of diſtorting our ideas of them in any conſiderable degree. In all other caſes, common ſenſe is ſufficient to direct us, if not to the moſt exquiſite propriety of conduct, yet to ſomething which is not very far from it; and provided we are in earneſt deſirous to do well, our behaviour will always, upon the whole, be praiſeworthy. That to obey the will of the Deity, is the firſt rule of duty, all men are agreed. But concerning the particular commandments which that will may impoſe upon us, they differ widely from one another. In this, therefore, the greateſt mutual forbearance and toleration

is

is due; and though the defence of ſociety requires that crimes ſhould be puniſhed, from whatever motives they proceed, yet a good man will always puniſh them with reluctance, when they evidently proceed from falſe notions of religious duty. He will never feel againſt thoſe who commit them that indignation which he feels againſt other criminals, but will rather regret, and ſometimes even admire their unfortunate firmneſs and magnanimity, at the very time that he puniſhes their crime. In the tragedy of Mahomet, one of the fineſt of Mr. Voltaire's, it is well repreſented, what ought to be our ſentiments for crimes which proceed from ſuch motives. In that tragedy, two young people of different ſexes, of the moſt innocent and virtuous diſpoſitions, and without any other weakneſs except what endears them the more to us, a mutual fondneſs for one another, are inſtigated by the ſtrongeſt motives of a falſe religion, to commit a horrid murder, that ſhocks all the principles of human nature. A venerable old man, who had expreſſed the moſt tender affection for them both, for whom, notwithſtanding he was the avowed enemy of their religion, they had both conceived the higheſt reverence and eſteem, and who was in reality their father, though they did not know him to be ſuch, is pointed out to them as a ſacrifice which God had expreſsly required at their hands, and they are commanded to kill him. While they are about executing this crime, they are tortured with all the agonies which can ariſe

 from

PART III. from the ſtruggle between the idea of the indiſpenſableneſs of religious duty on the one ſide, and compaſſion, gratitude, reverence for the age, and love for the humanity and virtue of the perſon whom they are going to deſtroy, on the other. The repreſentation of this exhibits one of the moſt intereſting, and perhaps the moſt inſtructive ſpectacle that was ever introduced upon any theatre. The ſenſe of duty, however, at laſt prevails over all the amiable weakneſſes of human nature. They execute the crime impoſed upon them; but immediately diſcover their error, and the fraud which had deceived them, and are diſtracted with horror, remorſe, and reſentment. Such as are our ſentiments for the unhappy Seid and Palmira, ſuch ought we to feel for every perſon who is in this manner miſled by religion, when we are ſure that it is really religion which miſleads him, and not the pretence of it, which is made a cover to ſome of the worſt of human paſſions.

As a perſon may act wrong by following a wrong ſenſe of duty, ſo nature may ſometimes prevail, and lead him to act right in oppoſition to it. We cannot in this caſe be diſpleaſed to ſee that motive prevail, which we think ought to prevail, though the perſon himſelf is ſo weak as to think otherwiſe. As his conduct, however, is the effect of weakneſs, not principle, we are far from beſtowing upon it any thing that approaches to complete approbation. A bigotted Roman Catholic, who, during the maſſacre of St. Bartholomew, had been ſo over-

me by compaſſion, as to ſave ſome unhappy oteſtants, whom he thought it his duty to ſtroy, would not ſeem to be entitled to that gh applauſe which we ſhould have beſtowed on him, had he exerted the ſame generoſity th complete ſelf-approbation. We might be eaſed with the humanity of his temper, but ſhould ſtill regard him with a ſort of pity nich is altogether inconſiſtent with the admi- tion that is due to perfect virtue. It is the me caſe with all the other paſſions. We do t diſlike to ſee them exert themſelves pro- rly, even when a falſe notion of duty would rect the perſon to reſtrain them. A very vout Quaker, who upon being ſtruck upon e cheek, inſtead of turning up the other, ould ſo far forget his literal interpretation of r Saviour's precept, as to beſtow ſome good ſcipline upon the brute that inſulted him, ould not be diſagreeable to us. We ſhould ugh and be diverted with his ſpirit, and rather te him the better for it. But we ſhould by means regard him with that reſpect and teem which would ſeem due to one who, upon like occaſion, had acted properly from a juſt nſe of what was proper to be done. No tion can properly be called virtuous, which is ot accompanied with the ſentiment of ſelf- approbation.

THE

THEORY

OF

MORAL SENTIMENTS.

PART IV.

Of the EFFECT of UTILITY upon the SENTIMENT of APPROBATION.

Consisting of One Section.

CHAP. I.

Of the beauty which the appearance of UTILITY *bestows upon all the productions of art, and of the extensive influence of this species of Beauty.*

PART IV.

THAT utility is one of the principal sources of beauty has been observed by every body, who has considered with any attention what constitutes the nature of beauty. The conveniency of a house gives pleasure to the spectator as well as its regularity, and he is as much hurt when he observes the contrary defect, as when he sees the correspondent windows of different forms, or the door not placed exactly in the middle of the building. That the fitness of

of any ſyſtem or machine to produce the end for which it was intended, beſtows a certain propriety and beauty upon the whole, and renders the very thought and contemplation of it agreeable, is ſo very obvious that nobody has overlooked it.

The cauſe too, why utility pleaſes, has of late been aſſigned by an ingenious and agreeable philoſopher, who joins the greateſt depth of thought to the greateſt elegance of expreſſion, and poſſeſſes the ſingular and happy talent of treating the abſtruſeſt ſubjects not only with the moſt perfect perſpicuity, but with the moſt lively eloquence. The utility of any object, according to him, pleaſes the maſter by perpetually ſuggeſting to him the pleaſure or conveniency which it is fitted to promote. Every time he looks at it, he is put in mind of this pleaſure; and the object in this manner becomes a ſource of perpetual ſatisfaction and enjoyment. The ſpectator enters by ſympathy into the ſentiments of the maſter, and neceſſarily views the object under the ſame agreeable aſpect. When we viſit the palaces of the great, we cannot help conceiving the ſatisfaction we ſhould enjoy if we ourſelves were the maſters, and were poſſeſſed of ſo much artful and ingeniouſly contrived accommodation. A ſimilar account is given why the appearance of inconveniency ſhould render any object diſagreeable both to the owner and to the ſpectator.

But that this fitneſs, this happy contrivance of any production of art, ſhould often be more

PART IV. valued, than the very end for which it was intended; and that the exact adjuſtment of the means for attaining any conveniency or pleaſure, ſhould frequently be more regarded, than that very conveniency or pleaſure, in the attainment of which their whole merit would ſeem to conſiſt, has not, ſo far as I know, been yet taken notice of by any body. That this, however, is very frequently the caſe, may be obſerved in a thouſand inſtances, both in the moſt frivolous and in the moſt important concerns of human life.

When a perſon comes into his chamber, and finds the chairs all ſtanding in the middle of the room, he is angry with his ſervant, and rather than ſee them continue in that diſorder, perhaps takes the trouble himſelf to ſet them all in their places with their backs to the wall. The whole propriety of this new ſituation ariſes from its ſuperior conveniency in leaving the floor free and diſengaged. To attain this conveniency he voluntarily puts himſelf to more trouble than all he could have ſuffered from the want of it; ſince nothing was more eaſy, than to have ſet himſelf down upon one of them, which is probably what he does when his labour is over. What he wanted, therefore, it ſeems, was not ſo much this conveniency, as that arrangement of things which promotes it. Yet it is this conveniency which ultimately recommends that arrangement, and beſtows upon it the whole of its propriety and beauty.

A watch

A watch, in the ſame manner, that falls behind above two minutes in a day, is deſpiſed by one curious in watches. He ſells it perhaps for a couple of guineas, and purchaſes another at fifty, which will not loſe above a minute in a fortnight. The ſole uſe of watches however, is to tell us what o'clock it is, and to hinder us from breaking any engagement, or ſuffering any other inconveniency by our ignorance in that particular point. But the perſon ſo nice with regard to this machine, will not always be found either more ſcrupulouſly punctual than other men, or more anxiouſly concerned upon any other account, to know preciſely what time of day it is. What intereſts him is not ſo much the attainment of this piece of knowledge, as the perfection of the machine which ſerves to attain it.

How many people ruin themſelves by laying out money on trinkets of frivolous utility? What pleaſes theſe lovers of toys is not ſo much the utility, as the aptneſs of the machines which are fitted to promote it. All their pockets are ſtuffed with little conveniencies. They contrive new pockets, unknown in the clothes of other people, in order to carry a greater number. They walk about loaded with a multitude of baubles, in weight and ſometimes in value not inferior to an ordinary Jew's-box, ſome of which may ſometimes be of ſome little uſe, but all of which might at all times be very well ſpared, and of which the whole utility is certainly not worth the fatigue of bearing the burden.

Nor is it only with regard to ſuch frivolous objects that our conduct is influenced by this

PART IV. principle; it is often the ſecret motive of the moſt ſerious and important purſuits of both private and public life.

The poor man's ſon, whom heaven in its anger has viſited with ambition, when he begins to look around him, admires the condition of the rich. He finds the cottage of his father too ſmall for his accommodation, and fancies he ſhould be lodged more at his eaſe in a palace. He is diſpleaſed with being obliged to walk a-foot, or to endure the fatigue of riding on horſeback. He ſees his ſuperiors carried about in machines, and imagines that in one of theſe he could travel with leſs inconveniency. He feels himſelf naturally indolent, and willing to ſerve himſelf with his own hands as little as poſſible; and judges, that a numerous retinue of ſervants would ſave him from a great deal of trouble. He thinks if he had attained all theſe, he would ſit ſtill contentedly, and be quiet, enjoying himſelf in the thought of the happineſs and tranquillity of his ſituation. He is enchanted with the diſtant idea of this felicity. It appears in his fancy like the life of ſome ſuperior rank of beings, and, in order to arrive at it, he devotes himſelf for ever to the purſuit of wealth and greatneſs. To obtain the conveniences which theſe afford, he ſubmits in the firſt year, nay, in the firſt month of his application, to more fatigue of body and more uneaſineſs of mind than he could have ſuffered through the whole of his life from the want of them. He ſtudies to diſtinguiſh himſelf in ſome laborious profeſſion.

With

ith the moſt unrelenting induſtry he labours ght and day to acquire talents ſuperior to all competitors. He endeavours next to bring oſe talents into public view, and with equal lduity ſolicits every opportunity of employ-ent. For this purpoſe he makes his court to mankind; he ſerves thoſe whom he hates, d is obſequious to thoſe whom he deſpiſes. rough the whole of his life he purſues the ea of a certain artificial and elegant repoſe ich he may never arrive at, for which he rifices a real tranquillity that is at all times his power, and which, if in the extremity of l age he ſhould at laſt attain to it, he will find be in no reſpect preferable to that humble urity and contentment which he had aban-ned for it. It is then, in the laſt dregs of e, his body waſted with toil and diſeaſes, his nd galled and ruffled by the memory of a uſand injuries and diſappointments which he agines he has met with from the injuſtice of enemies, or from the perfidy and ingratitude his friends, that he begins at laſt to find that alth and greatneſs are mere trinkets of frivo-s utility, no more adapted for procuring eaſe body or tranquillity of mind than the tweezer-es of the lover of toys; and, like them too, re troubleſome to the perſon who carries m about with him than all the advantages y can afford him are commodious. There is other real difference between them, except t the conveniencies of the one are ſomewhat re obſervable than thoſe of the other. The

palaces,

PART IV.

palaces, the gardens, the equipage, the retinu of the great, are objects of which the obviou conveniency ſtrikes every body. They do no require that their maſters ſhould point out to us wherein conſiſts their utility. Of our ow accord we readily enter into it, and by ſym pathy enjoy and thereby applaud the ſatisfactio which they are fitted to afford him. But th curioſity of a tooth-pick, of an ear-picker, of a machine for cutting the nails, or of any othe trinket of the ſame kind, is not ſo obvious Their conveniency may perhaps be equall great, but it is not ſo ſtriking, and we do no ſo readily enter into the ſatisfaction of the man who poſſeſſes them. They are therefore le reaſonable ſubjects of vanity than the magnifi cence of wealth and greatneſs; and in this con ſiſts the ſole advantage of theſe laſt. The more effectually gratify that love of diſtinctio ſo natural to man. To one who was to liv alone in a deſolate iſland it might be a matte of doubt, perhaps, whether a palace, or a col lection of ſuch ſmall conveniencies as are com monly contained in a tweezer-caſe, would con tribute moſt to his happineſs and enjoyment. I he is to live in ſociety, indeed, there can be n compariſon, becauſe in this, as in all other caſe we conſtantly pay more regard to the ſentiment of the ſpectator, than to thoſe of the perſo principally concerned, and conſider rather ho his ſituation will appear to other people, tha how it will appear to himſelf. If we examin however, why the ſpectator diſtinguiſhes wit

ſuc

ich admiration the condition of the rich and he great, we ſhall find that it is not ſo much pon account of the ſuperior eaſe or pleaſure hich they are ſuppoſed to enjoy, as of the umberleſs artificial and elegant contrivances or promoting this eaſe or pleaſure. He does ot even imagine that they are really happier han other people: but he imagines that they poſſeſs more means of happineſs. And it is the ingenious and artful adjuſtment of thoſe means to the end for which they were intended, that is the principal ſource of his admiration. But in the languor of diſeaſe and the wearineſs of old age, the pleaſures of the vain and empty diſtinctions of greatneſs diſappear. To one, in this ſituation, they are no longer capable of recommending thoſe toilſome purſuits in which they had formerly engaged him. In his heart he curſes ambition, and vainly regrets the eaſe and the indolence of youth, pleaſures which are fled for ever, and which he has fooliſhly ſacrificed for what, when he has got it, can afford him no real ſatisfaction. In this miſerable aſpect does greatneſs appear to every man when reduced either by ſpleen or diſeaſe to obſerve with attention his own ſituation, and to conſider what it is that is really wanting to his happineſs. Power and riches appear then to be, what they are, enormous and operoſe machines contrived to produce a few trifling conveniencies to the body, conſiſting of ſprings the moſt nice and delicate, which muſt be kept in order with the moſt anxious attention, and which in

ſpite

PART IV.

ſpite of all our care are ready every momen burſt into pieces, and to cruſh in their r their unfortunate poſſeſſor. They are imm fabrics, which it requires the labour of a life raiſe, which threaten every moment to o whelm the perſon that dwells in them, which while they ſtand, though they may f him from ſome ſmaller inconveniencies, protect him from none of the ſeverer inclem cies of the ſeaſon. They keep off the ſumm ſhower, not the winter ſtorm, but leave h always as much, and ſometimes more expo than before, to anxiety, to fear, and to ſorro to diſeaſes, to danger, and to death.

But though this ſplenetic philoſophy, wh in time of ſickneſs or low ſpirits is familiar every man, thus entirely depreciates thoſe gr objects of human deſire, when in better hea and in better humour, we never fail to reg them under a more agreeable aſpect. C imagination, which in pain and ſorrow ſee to be confined and cooped up within our o perſons, in times of eaſe and proſperity expa itſelf to every thing around us. We are th charmed with the beauty of that accommodati which reigns in the palaces and œconomy the great; and admire how every thing is adap to promote their eaſe, to prevent their wan to gratify their wiſhes, and to amuſe and ent tain their moſt frivolous deſires. If we confid the real ſatisfaction which all theſe things capable of affording, by itſelf and ſeparated fr the beauty of that arrangement which is fitt

to promote it, it will always appear in the highest degree contemptible and trifling. But we rarely view it in this abstract and philosophical light. We naturally confound it in our imagination with the order, the regular and harmonious movement of the system, the machine or œconomy by means of which it is produced. The pleasures of wealth and greatness, when considered in this complex view, strike the imagination as something grand and beautiful and noble, of which the attainment is well worth all the toil and anxiety which we are so apt to bestow upon it.

And it is well that nature imposes upon us in this manner. It is this deception which rouses and keeps in continual motion the industry of mankind. It is this which first prompted them to cultivate the ground, to build houses, to found cities and commonwealths, and to invent and improve all the sciences and arts, which ennoble and embellish human life; which have entirely changed the whole face of the globe, have turned the rude forests of nature into agreeable and fertile plains, and made the trackless and barren ocean a new fund of subsistence, and the great high road of communication to the different nations of the earth. The earth by these labours of mankind has been obliged to redouble her natural fertility, and to maintain a greater multitude of inhabitants. It is to no purpose, that the proud and unfeeling landlord views his extensive fields, and without a thought for the wants of his brethren, in imagination consumes himself

PART IV. himſelf the whole harveſt that grows upon them. The homely and vulgar proverb, that the eye is larger than the belly, never was more fully verified than with regard to him. The capacity of his ſtomach bears no proportion to the immenſity of his deſires, and will receive no more than that of the meaneſt peaſant. The reſt he is obliged to diſtribute among thoſe, who prepare, in the niceſt manner, that little which he himſelf makes uſe of, among thoſe who fit up the palace in which this little is to be conſumed, among thoſe who provide and keep in order all the different baubles and trinkets, which are employed in the œconomy of greatneſs; all of whom thus derive from his luxury and caprice, that ſhare of the neceſſaries of life, which they would in vain have expected from his humanity or his juſtice. The produce of the ſoil maintains at all times nearly that number of inhabitants which it is capable of maintaining. The rich only ſelect from the heap what is moſt precious and agreeable. They conſume little more than the poor, and in ſpite of their natural ſelfiſhneſs and rapacity, though they mean only their own conveniency, though the ſole end which they propoſe from the labours of all the thouſands whom they employ, be the gratification of their own vain and inſatiable deſires, they divide with the poor the produce of all their improvements. They are led by an inviſible hand to make nearly the ſame diſtribution of the neceſſaries of life, which would have been made, had the earth been divided into equal portions among all its inhabitants,

inhabitants, ıd thus with t intending it, without knowing it, advar ɜ the intereſt of the ſociety, and afford mea to the multiplication of the ſpecies. When Providence divided the earth among a few lordly maſters, it neither forgot nor abandoned thoſe who ſeemed to have been left out in the partition. Theſe laſt too enjoy their ſhare of all that it produces. In what conſtitutes the real happineſs of human life, they are in no reſpect inferior to thoſe who would ſeem ſo much above them. In eaſe of body and peace of mind, all the different ranks of life are nearly upon a level, and the beggar, who ſuns himſelf by the ſide of the highway, poſſeſſes that ſecurity which kings are fighting for.

The ſame principle, the ſame love of ſyſtem, the ſame regard to the beauty of order, of art and contrivance, frequently ſerves to recommend thoſe inſtitutions which tend to promote the public welfare. When a patriot exerts himſelf for the improvement of any part of the public police, his conduct does not always ariſe from pure ſympathy with the happineſs of thoſe who are to reap the benefit of it. It is not commonly from a fellow-feeling with carriers and waggoners that a public-ſpirited man encourages the mending of high roads. When the legiſlature eſtabliſhes premiums and other encouragements to advance the linen or woollen manufactures, its conduct ſeldom proceeds from pure ſympathy with the wearer of cheap or fine cloth, and much leſs from that with the manufacturer

or

PART IV.

or merchant. The perfection of police, the extenſion of trade and manufactures, are noble and magnificent objects. The contemplation of them pleaſes us, and we are intereſted in whatever can tend to advance them. They make part of the great ſyſtem of government, and the wheels of the political machine ſeem to move with more harmony and eaſe by means of them. We take pleaſure in beholding the perfection of ſo beautiful and grand a ſyſtem, and we are uneaſy till we remove any obſtruction that can in the leaſt diſturb or encumber the regularity of its motions. All conſtitutions of government, however, are valued only in proportion as they tend to promote the happineſs of thoſe who live under them. This is their ſole uſe and end. From a certain ſpirit of ſyſtem, however, from a certain love of art and contrivance, we ſometimes ſeem to value the means more than the end, and to be eager to promote the happineſs of our fellow-creatures, rather from a view to perfect and improve a certain beautiful and orderly ſyſtem, than from any immediate ſenſe or feeling of what they either ſuffer or enjoy. There have been men of the greateſt public ſpirit, who have ſhown themſelves in other reſpects not very ſenſible to the feelings of humanity. And on the contrary, there have been men of the greateſt humanity, who ſeem to have been entirely devoid of public ſpirit. Every man may find in the circle of his acquaintance inſtances both of the one kind and the other. Who had ever leſs humanity

or more public ſpirit, than the celebrated legiſlator of Muſcovy? The ſocial and well-natured James the Firſt of Great Britain ſeems, on the contrary, to have had ſcarce any paſſion, either for the glory or the intereſt of his country. Would you awaken the induſtry of the man who ſeems almoſt dead to ambition, it will often be to no purpoſe to deſcribe to him the happineſs of the rich and the great; to tell him that they are generally ſheltered from the ſun and the rain, that they are ſeldom hungry, that they are ſeldom cold, and that they are rarely expoſed to wearineſs, or to want of any kind. The moſt eloquent exhortation of this kind will have little effect upon him. If you would hope to ſucceed, you muſt deſcribe to him the conveniency and arrangement of the different apartments in their palaces; you muſt explain to him the propriety of their equipages, and point out to him the number, the order, and the different offices of all their attendants. If any thing is capable of making impreſſion upon him, this will. Yet all theſe things tend only to keep off the ſun and the rain, to ſave them from hunger and cold, from want and wearineſs. In the ſame manner, if you would implant public virtue in the breaſt of him who ſeems heedleſs of the intereſt of his country, it will often be to no purpoſe to tell him, what ſuperior advantages the ſubjects of a well-governed ſtate enjoy; that they are better lodged, that they are better clothed, that they are better fed. Theſe conſiderations will commonly make no great im-

 preſſion.

PART IV.

preſſion. You will be more likely to perſ if you deſcribe the great ſyſtem of public j which procures theſe advantages, if you e the connexions and dependencies of its ſ parts, their mutual ſubordination to one an and their general ſubſerviency to the hap of the ſociety: if you ſhow how this ſyſtem be introduced into his own country, w is that hinders it from taking place the preſent, how thoſe obſtructions might b moved, and all the ſeveral wheels of the ma of government be made to move with harmony and ſmoothneſs, without grating one another, or mutually retarding one ano motions. It is ſcarce poſſible that a man liſten to a diſcourſe of this kind, and no himſelf animated to ſome degree of ſpirit. He will, at leaſt for the momen ſome deſire to remove thoſe obſtruction to put into motion ſo beautiful and ſo o a machine. Nothing tends ſo much to pr public ſpirit as the ſtudy of politics, ſeveral ſyſtems of civil government, the vantages and diſadvantages, of the conſti of our own country, its ſituation, and i with regard to foreign nations, its com its defence, the diſadvantages it labours the dangers to which it may be expoſed to remove the one, and how to guard the other. Upon this account political di tions, if juſt, and reaſonable, and practi are of all the works of ſpeculation the uſeful. Even the weakeſt and the worſt o

are not altogether without their utility. They serve at least to animate the public passions of men, and rouse them to seek out the means of promoting the happiness of the society.

CHAP. II.

Of the beauty which the appearance of Utility bestows upon the characters and actions of men; and how far the perception of this beauty may be regarded as one of the original principles of approbation.

THE characters of men, as well as the contrivances of art, or the institutions of civil government, may be fitted either to promote or to disturb the happiness both of the individual and of the society. The prudent, the equitable, the active, resolute, and sober character promises prosperity and satisfaction, both to the person himself and to every one connected with him. The rash, the insolent, the slothful, effeminate, and voluptuous, on the contrary, forebodes ruin to the individual, and misfortune to all who have any thing to do with him. The first turn of mind has at least all the beauty which can belong to the most perfect machine that was ever invented for promoting the most agreeable purpose: and the second, all the deformity of the most awkward and clumsy con-

trivance. What inſtitution of government could tend ſo much to promote the happineſs of mankind as the general prevalence of wiſdom and virtue? All government is but an imperfect remedy for the deficiency of theſe. Whatever beauty, therefore, can belong to civil government upon account of its utility, muſt in a far ſuperior degree belong to theſe. On the contrary, what civil policy can be ſo ruinous and deſtructive as the vices of men? The fatal effects of bad government ariſe from nothing, but that it does not ſufficiently guard againſt the miſchiefs which human wickedneſs gives occaſion to.

This beauty and deformity which characters appear to derive from their uſefulneſs or inconveniency, are apt to ſtrike, in a peculiar manner, thoſe who conſider, in an abſtract and philoſophical light, the actions and conduct of mankind. When a philoſopher goes to examine why humanity is approved of, or cruelty condemned, he does not always form to himſelf, in a very clear and diſtinct manner, the conception of any one particular action either of cruelty or of humanity, but is commonly contented with the vague and indeterminate idea which the general names of thoſe qualities ſuggeſt to him. But it is in particular inſtances only that the propriety or impropriety, the merit or demerit of actions is very obvious and diſcernible. It is only when particular examples are given that we perceive diſtinctly either the concord or diſagreement between our own affections and thoſe of

of the agent, or feel a ſocial gratitude ariſe towards him in the one caſe, or a ſympathetic reſentment in the other. When we conſider virtue and vice in an abſtract and general manner, the qualities by which they excite theſe ſeveral ſentiments ſeem in a great meaſure to diſappear, and the ſentiments themſelves become leſs obvious and diſcernible. On the contrary, the happy effects of the one and the fatal conſequences of the other ſeem then to riſe up to the view, and as it were to ſtand out and diſtinguiſh themſelves from all the other qualities of either.

The ſame ingenious and agreeable author who firſt explained why utility pleaſes, has been ſo ſtruck with this view of things, as to reſolve our whole approbation of virtue into a perception of this ſpecies of beauty which reſults from the appearance of utility. No qualities of the mind, he obſerves, are approved of as virtuous, but ſuch as are uſeful or agreeable either to the perſon himſelf or to others; and no qualities are diſapproved of as vicious but ſuch as have a contrary tendency. And Nature, indeed, ſeems to have ſo happily adjuſted our ſentiments of approbation and diſapprobation, to the conveniency both of the individual and of the ſociety, that after the ſtricteſt examination it will be found, I believe, that this is univerſally the caſe. But ſtill I affirm, that it is not the view of this utility or hurtfulneſs which is either the firſt or principal ſource of our approbation and diſapprobation. Theſe ſentiments are no doubt enhanced and enlivened by the perception of the beauty or de-

PART IV. formity which refults from this utility or hurtfulnefs. But ftill, I fay, they are originally and effentially different from this perception.

For firft of all, it feems impoffible that the approbation of virtue fhould be a fentiment of the fame kind with that by which we approve of a convenient and well-contrived building; or that we fhould have no other reafon for praifing a man than that for which we commend a chefl of drawers.

And fecondly, it will be found, upon examination, that the ufefulnefs of any difpofition of mind is feldom the firft ground of our approbation; and that the fentiment of approbation always involves in it a fenfe of propriety quite diftinct from the perception of utility. We may obferve this with regard to all the qualities which are approved of as virtuous, both thofe which, according to this fyftem, are originally valued as ufeful to ourfelves, as well as thofe which are efteemed on account of their ufefulnefs to others.

The qualities moft ufeful to ourfelves are, firft of all, fuperior reafon and underftanding, by which we are capable of difcerning the remote confequences of all our actions, and of foreffeeing the advantage or detriment which is likely to refult from them: and fecondly, felf-command, by which we are enabled to abftain from prefent pleafure or to endure prefent pain, in order to obtain a greater pleafure or to avoid a greater pain in fome future time. In the union of thofe two qualities confifts the virtue of

of prudence, of all the virtues that which is moſt uſeful to the individual.

With regard to the firſt of thoſe qualities, it has been obſerved on a former occaſion, that ſuperior reaſon and underſtanding are originally approved of as juſt and right and accurate, and not merely as uſeful or advantageous. It is in the abſtruſer ſciences, particularly in the higher parts of mathematics, that the greateſt and moſt admired exertions of human reaſon have been diſplayed. But the utility of thoſe ſciences, either to the individual or to the public, is not very obvious, and to prove it, requires a diſcuſſion which is not always very eaſily comprehended. It was not, therefore, their utility which firſt recommended them to the public admiration. This quality was but little inſiſted upon, till it became neceſſary to make ſome reply to the reproaches of thoſe, who, having themſelves no taſte for ſuch ſublime diſcoveries, endeavoured to depreciate them as uſeleſs.

That ſelf-command, in the ſame manner, by which we reſtrain our preſent appetites, in order to gratify them more fully upon another occaſion, is approved of, as much under the aſpect of propriety, as under that of utility. When we act in this manner, the ſentiments which influence our conduct ſeem exactly to coincide with thoſe of the ſpectator. The ſpectator does not feel the ſolicitations of our preſent appetites.

To him the pleaſure which we are to enjoy a week hence, or a year hence, is juſt as intereſting as that which we are to enjoy this moment.

PART IV. When for the ſake of the preſent, therefore, we ſacrifice the future, our conduct appears to him abſurd and extravagant in the higheſt degree, and he cannot enter into the principles which influence it. On the contrary, when we abſtain from preſent pleaſure, in order to ſecure greater pleaſure to come, when we act as if the remote object intereſted us as much as that which immediately preſſes upon the ſenſes, as our affections exactly correſpond with his own, he cannot fail to approve of our behaviour: and as he knows from experience, how few are capable of this ſelf-command, he looks upon our conduct with a conſiderable degree of wonder and admiration. Hence ariſes that eminent eſteem with which all men naturally regard a ſteady perſeverance in the practice of frugality, induſtry, and application, though directed to no other purpoſe than the acquiſition of fortune. The reſolute firmneſs of the perſon who acts in this manner, and in order to obtain a great though remote advantage, not only gives up all preſent pleaſures, but endures the greateſt labour both of mind and body, neceſſarily commands our approbation. That view of his intereſt and happineſs which appears to regulate his conduct, exactly tallies with the idea which we naturally form of it. There is the moſt perfect correſpondence between his ſentiments and our own, and at the ſame time, from our experience of the common weakneſs of human nature, it is a correſpondence which we could not reaſonably have expected. We not only approve, there-

ſore, but in ſome meaſure admire his conduct, and think it worthy of a conſiderable degree of applauſe. It is the conſciouſneſs of this merited approbation and eſteem which is alone capable of ſupporting the agent in this tenour of conduct. The pleaſure which we are to enjoy ten years hence intereſts us ſo little in compariſon with that which we may enjoy to-day, the paſſion which the firſt excites, is naturally ſo weak in compariſon with that violent emotion which the ſecond is apt to give occaſion to, that the one could never be any balance to the other, unleſs it was ſupported by the ſenſe of propriety, by the conſciouſneſs that we merited the eſteem and approbation of every body, by acting in the one way, and that we became the proper objects of their contempt and deriſion by behaving in the other.

Humanity, juſtice, generoſity, and public ſpirit, are the qualities moſt uſeful to others. Wherein conſiſts the propriety of humanity and juſtice has been explained upon a former occaſion, where it was ſhewn how much our eſteem and approbation of thoſe qualities depended upon the concord between the affections of the agent and thoſe of the ſpectators.

The propriety of generoſity and public ſpirit is founded upon the ſame principle with that of juſtice. Generoſity is different from humanity. Thoſe two qualities, which at firſt ſight ſeem ſo nearly allied, do not always belong to the ſame perſon. Humanity is the virtue of a woman, generoſity of a man. The fair-ſex, who have commonly

PART IV. commonly much more tenderneſs than ours, have ſeldom ſo much generoſity. That women rarely make conſiderable donations, is an obſervation of the civil law*. Humanity conſiſts merely in the exquiſite fellow-feeling which the ſpectator entertains with the ſentiments of the perſons principally concerned, ſo as to grieve for their ſufferings, to reſent their injuries, and to rejoice at their good fortune. The moſt humane actions require no ſelf-denial, no ſelf-command, no great exertion of the ſenſe of propriety. They conſiſt only in doing what this exquiſite ſympathy would of its own accord prompt us to do. But it is otherwiſe with generoſity. We never are generous except when in ſome reſpect we prefer ſome other perſon to ourſelves, and ſacrifice ſome great and important intereſt of our own to an equal intereſt of a friend or of a ſuperior. The man who gives up his pretenſions to an office that was the great object of his ambition, becauſe he imagines that the ſervices of another are better entitled to it; the man who expoſes his life to defend that of his friend, which he judges to be of more importance, neither of them act from humanity, or becauſe they feel more exquiſitely what concerns that other perſon that what concerns themſelves. They both conſider thoſe oppoſite intereſts, not in the light in which they naturally appear to themſelves, but in that in which they appear to others. To every byſtander, the

* Raro mulieres donare ſolent.

ſucceſs

ſucceſs or preſervation of this other perſon may juſtly be more intereſting than their own; but it cannot be ſo to themſelves. When to the intereſt of this other perſon, therefore, they ſacrifice their own, they accommodate themſelves to the ſentiments of the ſpectator, and by an effort of magnanimity act according to thoſe views of things which they feel, muſt naturally occur to any third perſon. The ſoldier who throws away his life in order to defend that of his officer, would perhaps be but little affected by the death of that officer, if it ſhould happen without any fault of his own; and a very ſmall diſaſter which had befallen himſelf might excite a much more lively ſorrow. But when he endeavours to act ſo as to deſerve applauſe, and to make the impartial ſpectator enter into the principles of his conduct, he feels, that to every body but himſelf, his own life is a trifle compared with that of his officer, and that when he ſacrifices the one to the other, he acts quite properly and agreeably to what would be the natural apprehenſions of every impartial byſtander.

It is the ſame caſe with the greater exertions of public ſpirit. When a young officer expoſes his life to acquire ſome inconſiderable addition to the dominions of his ſovereign, it is not becauſe the acquiſition of the new territory is, to himſelf, an object more deſireable than the preſervation of his own life. To him his own life is of infinitely more value than the conqueſt of a whole kingdom for the ſtate which he ſerves.

PART IV.

ſerves. But when he compares thoſe two objects with one another, he does not view them in the light in which they naturally appear to himſelf, but in that in which they appear to the nation he fights for. To them the ſucceſs of the war is of the higheſt importance; the life of a private perſon of ſcarce any conſequence. When he puts himſelf in their ſituation, he immediately feels that he cannot be too prodigal of his blood, if, by ſhedding it, he can promote ſo valuable a purpoſe. In thus thwarting, from a ſenſe of duty and propriety, the ſtrongeſt of all natural propenſities, conſiſts the heroiſm of his conduct. There is many an honeſt Engliſhman, who, in his private ſtation, would be more ſeriouſly diſturbed by the loſs of a guinea, than by the national loſs of Minorca, who yet, had it been in his power to defend that fortreſs, would have ſacrificed his life a thouſand times rather than, through his fault, have let it fall into the hands of the enemy. When the firſt Brutus led forth his own ſons to a capital puniſhment, becauſe they had conſpired againſt the riſing liberty of Rome, he ſacrificed what, if he had conſulted his own breaſt only, would appear to be the ſtronger to the weaker affection. Brutus ought naturally to have felt much more for the death of his own ſons, than for all that probably Rome could have ſuffered from the want of ſo great an example. But he viewed them, not with the eyes of a father, but with thoſe of a Roman citizen. He entered ſo thoroughly into the ſentiments of this laſt character, that he paid

aid no regard to that tie, by which he himſelf was connected with them; and to a Roman citizen, the ſons even of Brutus ſeemed contemptible, when put into the balance with the ſmalleſt intereſt of Rome. In theſe and in all other caſes of this kind, our admiration is not ſo much founded upon the utility, as upon the unexpected, and on that account the great, the noble, and exalted propriety of ſuch actions. This utility, when we come to view it, beſtows upon them, undoubtedly, a new beauty, and upon that account ſtill further recommends them to our approbation. This beauty, however, is chiefly perceived by men of reflection and ſpeculation, and is by no means the quality which firſt recommends ſuch actions to the natural ſentiments of the bulk of mankind.

It is to be obſerved, that ſo far as the ſentiment of approbation ariſes from the perception of this beauty of utility, it has no reference of any kind to the ſentiments of others. If it was poſſible, therefore, that a perſon ſhould grow up to manhood without any communication with ſociety, his own actions might, notwithſtanding, be agreeable or diſagreeable to him on account of their tendency to his happineſs or diſadvantage. He might perceive a beauty of this kind in prudence, temperance, and good conduct, and a deformity in the oppoſite behaviour: he might view his own temper and character with that ſort of ſatisfaction with which we conſider a well-contrived machine, in the one caſe; or with that ſort of diſtaſte and diſſatisfaction with

which

PART IV.

which we regard a very awkward and clumsy contrivance, in the other. As these perceptions, however, are merely a matter of taste, and have all the feebleness and delicacy of that species of perceptions, upon the justness of which what is properly called taste is founded, they probably would not be much attended to by one in his solitary and miserable condition. Even though they should occur to him, they would by no means have the same effect upon him, antecedent to his connexion with society, which they would have in consequence of that connexion. He would not be cast down with inward shame at the thought of this deformity; nor would he be elevated with secret triumph of mind from the consciousness of the contrary beauty. He would not exult from the notion of deserving reward in the one case, nor tremble from the suspicion of meriting punishment in the other. All such sentiments suppose the idea of some other being, who is the natural judge of the person that feels them; and it is only by sympathy with the decisions of this arbiter of his conduct, that he can conceive, either the triumph of self-applause, or the shame of self-condemnation.

THE

THEORY

OF

MORAL SENTIMENTS.

PART V.

Of the Influence of Custom and Fashion upon the Sentiments of Moral Approbation and Disapprobation.

Consisting of One Section.

CHAP. I.

Of the Influence of Custom and Fashion upon our notions of Beauty and Deformity.

PART V. CHAP. I.

THERE are other principles besides those already enumerated, which have a considerable influence upon the moral sentiments of mankind, and are the chief causes of the many irregular and discordant opinions which prevail in different ages and nations concerning what is blamable or praise-worthy. These principles

are

PART V.

are cuſtom and faſhion, principles which extend their dominion over our judgments concerning beauty of every kind.

When two objects have frequently been ſeen together, the imagination acquires a habit of paſſing eaſily from the one to the other. If the firſt appear, we lay our account that the ſecond is to follow. Of their own accord they put us in mind of one another, and the attention glides eaſily along them. Though, independent of cuſtom, there ſhould be no real beauty in their union, yet when cuſtom has thus connected them together, we feel an impropriety in their ſeparation. The one we think is awkward when it appears without its uſual companion. We miſs ſomething which we expected to find, and the habitual arrangement of our ideas is diſturbed by the diſappointment. A ſuit of clothes, for example, ſeems to want ſomething if they are without the moſt inſignificant ornament which uſually accompanies them, and we find a meanneſs or awkwardneſs in the abſence even of a haunch button. When there is any natural propriety in the union, cuſtom increaſes our ſenſe of it, and makes a different arrangement appear ſtill more diſagreeable than it would otherwiſe ſeem to be. Thoſe who have been accuſtomed to ſee things in a good taſte, are more diſguſted by whatever is clumſy or awkward. Where the conjunction is improper, cuſtom either diminiſhes, or takes away altogether, our ſenſe of the impropriety. Thoſe who have been accuſtomed to ſlovenly diſorder loſe all ſenſe of neatneſs or elegance.

elegance. The modes of furniture or dreſs which ſeem ridiculous to ſtrangers, give no offence to the people who are uſed to them.

Faſhion is different from cuſtom, or rather is a particular ſpecies of it. That is not the faſhion which every body wears, but which thoſe wear who are of a high rank, or character. The graceful, the eaſy, and commanding manners of the great, joined to the uſual richneſs and magnificence of their dreſs, give a grace to the very form which they happen to beſtow upon it. As long as they continue to uſe this form, it is connected in our imaginations with the idea of ſomething that is genteel and magnificent, and though in itſelf it ſhould be indifferent, it ſeems, on account of this relation, to have ſomething about it that is genteel and magnificent too. As ſoon as they drop it, it loſes all the grace, which it had appeared to poſſeſs before, and being now uſed only by the inferior ranks of people, ſeems to have ſomething of their meanneſs and awkwardneſs.

Dreſs and furniture are allowed by all the world to be entirely under the dominion of cuſtom and faſhion. The influence of thoſe principles, however, is by no means confined to ſo narrow a ſphere, but extends itſelf to whatever is in any reſpect the object of taſte, to muſic, to poetry, to architecture. The modes of dreſs and furniture are continually changing, and that faſhion appearing ridiculous to-day which was admired five years ago, we are experimentally convinced that it owed its vogue chiefly or entirely

PART V.

tirely to cuſtom and faſhion. Clothes and furniture are not made of very durable materials. A well-fancied coat is done in a twelve-month, and cannot continue longer to propagate, as the faſhion, that form according to which it was made. The modes of furniture change leſs rapidly than thoſe of dreſs; becauſe furniture is commonly more durable. In five or ſix years, however, it generally undergoes an entire revolution, and every man in his own time ſees the faſhion in this reſpect change many different ways. The productions of the other arts are much more laſting, and, when happily imagined, may continue to propagate the faſhion of their make for a much longer time. A well-contrived building may endure many centuries: a beautiful air may be delivered down by a ſort of tradition, through many ſucceſſive generations: a well-written poem may laſt as long as the world; and all of them continue for ages together, to give the vogue to that particular ſtyle, to that particular taſte or manner, according to which each of them was compoſed. Few men have an opportunity of ſeeing in their own times the faſhion in any of theſe arts change very conſiderably. Few men have ſo much experience and acquaintance with the different modes which have obtained in remote ages and nations, as to be thoroughly reconciled to them, or to judge with impartiality between them, and what takes place in their own age and country. Few men therefore are willing to allow, that cuſtom or faſhion have much

ı influence upon their judgments concerning is beautiful or otherwiſe, in the productions y of thoſe arts; but imagine, that all the , which they think ought to be obſerved in of them, are founded upon reaſon and e, not upon habit or prejudice. A very attention, however, may convince them of ontrary, and ſatisfy them, that the influence ſtom and faſhion over dreſs and furniture, t more abſolute than over architecture, y, and muſic.

n any reaſon, for example, be aſſigned why Doric capital ſhould be appropriated to a , whoſe height is equal to eight diameters; onic volute to one of nine; and the Co- ian foliage to one of ten? The propriety ch of thoſe appropriations can be founded nothing but habit and cuſtom. The eye ıg been uſed to ſee a particular proportion ected with a particular ornament, would ffended if they were not joined together. ı of the five orders has its peculiar orna- n, which cannot be changed for any other, out giving offence to all thoſe who know hing of the rules of architecture. Accord- o ſome Architects, indeed, ſuch is the ex- te judgment with which the ancients have ned to each order its proper ornaments, no others can be found which are equally ble. It ſeems, however, a little difficult to nceived that theſe forms, though, no doubt, nely agreeable, ſhould be the only forms

PART V.

which can ſuit thoſe proportions, that there ſhould not be five hundred others which, antecedent to eſtabliſhed cuſtom, would have fitted them equally well. When cuſtom, however, has eſtabliſhed particular rules of building, provided they are not abſolutely unreaſonable, it is abſurd to think of altering them for others which are only equally good, or even for others which, in point of elegance and beauty, have naturally ſome little advantage over them. A man would be ridiculous who ſhould appear in public with a ſuit of clothes quite different from thoſe which are commonly worn, though the new dreſs ſhould in itſelf be ever ſo graceful or convenient. And there ſeems to be an abſurdity of the ſame kind in ornamenting a houſe after a quite different manner from that which cuſtom and faſhion have preſcribed; though the new ornaments ſhould in themſelves be ſomewhat ſuperior to the common ones.

According to the ancient rhetoricians, a certain meaſure or verſe was by nature appropriated to each particular ſpecies of writing, as being naturally expreſſive of that character, ſentiment, or paſſion, which ought to predominate in it. One verſe, they ſaid, was fit for grave and another for gay works, which could not, they thought, be interchanged without the greateſt impropriety. The experience of modern times, however, ſeems to contradict this principle, though in itſelf it would appear to be extremely probable. What is the burleſque verſe in Eng-

liſh

ı, is the heroic verſe in French. The trage-
s of Racine and the Henriad of Voltaire, are
arly in the ſame verſe with,

Let me have your advice in a weighty affair.

e burleſque verſe in French, on the contrary,
pretty much the ſame with the heroic verſe of
ı ſyllables in Engliſh. Cuſtom has made the
e Nation aſſociate the ideas of gravity, ſub-
ity, and ſerioufneſs, to that meaſure which the
ıer has connected with whatever is gay, flip-
nt, and ludicrous. Nothing would appear
re abſurd in Engliſh, than a tragedy written
the Alexandrine verſes of the French; or in
ench, than a work of the ſame kind in verſes
ten ſyllables.

An eminent artiſt will bring about a conſider-
le change in the eſtabliſhed modes of each of
oſe arts, and introduce a new faſhion of
iting, muſic, or architecture. As the dreſs
an agreeable man of high rank recommends
elf, and how peculiar and fantaſtical ſoever,
mes ſoon to be admired and imitated; ſo the
cellencies of an eminent maſter recommend
ı peculiarities, and his manner becomes the
hionable ſtyle in the art which he practiſes,
ıe taſte of the Italians in muſic and architec-
re has, within theſe fifty years, undergone a
nſiderable change, from imitating the pecu-
rities of ſome eminent maſters in each of
oſe arts. Seneca is accuſed by Quintilian of
ving corrupted the taſte of the Romans, and

PART V. of having introduced a frivolous prettineſs in the room of majeſtic reaſon and maſculine eloquence. Salluſt and Tacitus have by others been charged with the ſame accuſation, though in a different manner. They gave reputation, it is pretended, to a ſtyle, which though in the higheſt degree conciſe, elegant, expreſſive, and even poetical, wanted, however, eaſe, ſimplicity, and nature, and was evidently the production of the moſt laboured and ſtudied affectation. How many great qualities muſt that writer poſſeſs, who can thus render his very faults agreeable? After the praiſe of refining the taſte of a nation, the higheſt eulogy, perhaps, which can be beſtowed upon any author, is to ſay, that he corrupted it. In our own language, Mr. Pope and Dr. Swift have each of them introduced a manner different from what was practiſed before, into all works that are written in rhyme, the one in long verſes, the other in ſhort. The quaintneſs of Butler has given place to the plainneſs of Swift. The rambling freedom of Dryden, and the correct but often tedious and proſaic languor of Addiſon, are no longer the objects of imitation, but all long verſes are now written after the manner of the nervous preciſion of Mr. Pope.

Neither is it only over the productions of the arts, that cuſtom and faſhion exert their dominion. They influence our judgments, in the ſame manner, with regard to the beauty of natural objects. What various and oppoſite forms are deemed beautiful in different ſpecies of

ings? The proportions which are admired in ıe animal, are altogether different from thoſe hich are eſteemed in another. Every claſs ' things has its own peculiar conformation, hich is approved of, and has a beauty of its vn, diſtinct from that of every other ſpecies. is upon this account that a learned Jeſuit, ıther Buffier, has determined that the beauty ' every object conſiſts in that form and colour, hich is moſt uſual among things of that parcular ſort to which it belongs. Thus, in the ıman form, the beauty of each feature lies in certain middle, equally removed from a variety ' other forms that are ugly. A beautiful noſe, r example, is one that is neither very long, ır very ſhort, neither very ſtraight, nor very ooked, but a ſort of middle among all theſe ctremes, and leſs different from any one of em, than all of them are from one another. . is the form which Nature ſeems to have aimed : in them all, which, however, ſhe deviates from . a great variety of ways, and very ſeldom hits tactly; but to which all thoſe deviations ſtill ear a very ſtrong reſemblance. When a numır of drawings are made after one pattern, ıough they may all miſs it in ſome reſpects, yet ıey will all reſemble it more than they reſemble ıe another; the general character of the patrn will run through them all; the moſt finılar and odd will be thoſe which are moſt wide f it; and though very few will copy it exactly, et the moſt accurate delineations will bear a reater reſemblance to the moſt careleſs, than

PART V. the careleſs ones will bear to one another. In the ſame manner, in each ſpecies of creatures, what is moſt beautiful bears the ſtrongeſt characters of the general fabric of the ſpecies, and has the ſtrongeſt reſemblance to the greater part of the individuals with which it is claſſed. Monſters, on the contrary, or what is perfectly deformed, are always moſt ſingular and odd, and have the leaſt reſemblance to the generality of that ſpecies to which they belong. And thus the beauty of each ſpecies, though in one ſenſe the rareſt of all things, becauſe few individuals hit this middle form exactly, yet in another, is the moſt common, becauſe all the deviations from it reſemble it more than they reſemble one another. The moſt cuſtomary form, therefore, is in each ſpecies of things, according to him, the moſt beautiful. And hence it is that a certain practice and experience in contemplating each ſpecies of objects is requiſite before we can judge of its beauty, or know wherein the middle and moſt uſual form conſiſts. The niceſt judgement concerning the beauty of the human ſpecies will not help us to judge of that of flowers, or horſes, or any other ſpecies of things. It is for the ſame reaſon that in different climates, and where different cuſtoms and ways of living take place, as the generality of any ſpecies receives a different conformation from thoſe circumſtances, ſo different ideas of its beauty prevail. The beauty of a Mooriſh is not exactly the ſame with that of an Engliſh horſe. What different ideas are formed in different nations concerning

concerning the beauty of the human ſhape and countenance? A fair complexion is a ſhocking deformity upon the coaſt of Guinea. Thick lips and a flat noſe are a beauty. In ſome nations long ears that hang down upon the ſhoulders are the objects of univerſal admiration. In China if a lady's foot is ſo large as to be fit to walk upon, ſhe is regarded as a monſter of uglineſs. Some of the ſavage nations in North-America tie four boards round the heads of their children, and thus ſqueeze them, while the bones are tender and griſtly, into a form that is almoſt perfectly ſquare. Europeans are aſtoniſhed at the abſurd barbarity of this practice, to which ſome miſſionaries have imputed the ſingular ſtupidity of thoſe nations among whom it prevails. But when they condemn thoſe ſavages, they do not reflect that the ladies in Europe had, till within theſe very few years, been endeavouring, for near a century paſt, to ſqueeze the beautiful roundneſs of their natural ſhape into a ſquare form of the ſame kind. And that, notwithſtanding the many diſtortions and diſeaſes which this practice was known to occaſion, cuſtom had rendered it agreeable among ſome of the moſt civilized nations which, perhaps, the world ever beheld.

Such is the ſyſtem of this learned and ingenious Father, concerning the nature of beauty; of which the whole charm, according to him, would thus ſeem to ariſe from its falling in with the habits which cuſtom had impreſſed upon the imagination, with regard to things of each

PART V.

each particular kind. I cannot, however, be induced to believe that our ſenſe even of external beauty is founded altogether on cuſtom. The utility of any form, its fitneſs for the uſeful purpoſes for which it was intended evidently recommends it, and renders it agreeable to us, independent of cuſtom. Certain colours are more agreeable than others, and give more delight to the eye the firſt time it ever beholds them. A ſmooth ſurface is more agreeable than a rough one. Variety is more pleaſing than a tedious undiverſified uniformity. Connected variety, in which each new appearance ſeems to be introduced by what went before it, and in which all the adjoining parts ſeem to have ſome natural relation to one another, is more agreeable than a disjointed and diſorderly aſſemblage of unconnected objects. But though I cannot admit that cuſtom is the ſole principle of beauty, yet I can ſo far allow the truth of this ingenious ſyſtem as to grant, that there is ſcarce any one external form ſo beautiful as to pleaſe, if quite contrary to cuſtom and unlike whatever we have been uſed to in that particular ſpecies of things: or ſo deformed as not to be agreeable, if cuſtom uniformly ſupports it, and habituates us to ſee it in every ſingle individual of the kind.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

f the Influence of Cuſtom and Faſhion upon Moral Sentiments.

CHAP. II.

INCE our ſentiments concerning beauty of every kind, are ſo much influenced by cuſ- n and faſhion, it cannot be expected, that ſe, concerning the beauty of conduct, ſhould entirely exempted from the dominion of thoſe inciples. Their influence here, however, ſeems be much leſs than it is every where elſe. ere is, perhaps, no form of external objects, w abſurd and fantaſtical ſoever, to which ſtom will not reconcile us, or which faſhion ll not render even agreeable. But the cha- ters and conduct of a Nero, or a Claudius, e what no cuſtom will ever reconcile us to, at no faſhion will ever render agreeable; but e one will always be the object of dread and tred; the other of ſcorn and deriſion. The inciples of the imagination, upon which our nſe of beauty depends, are of a very nice and licate nature, and may eaſily be altered by bit and education: but the ſentiments of oral approbation and diſapprobation, are unded on the ſtrongeſt and moſt vigorous ſſions of human nature; and though they may ſomewhat warpt, cannot be entirely per- rted.

But

PART V.

But though the influence of cuſtom and faſhion upon moral ſentiments, is not altogether ſo great, it is however perfectly ſimilar to what it is every where elſe. When cuſtom and faſhion coincide with the natural principles of right and wrong, they heighten the delicacy of our ſentiments, and increaſe our abhorrence for every thing which approaches to evil. Thoſe who have been educated in what is really good company, not in what is commonly called ſuch, who have been accuſtomed to ſee nothing in the perſons whom they eſteemed and lived with, but juſtice, modeſty, humanity, and good order; are more ſhocked with whatever ſeems to be inconſiſtent with the rules which thoſe virtues preſcribe. Thoſe, on the contrary, who have had the misfortune to be brought up amidſt violence, licentiouſneſs, falſehood, and injuſtice; loſe, though not all ſenſe of the impropriety of ſuch conduct, yet all ſenſe of its dreadful enormity, or of the vengeance and puniſhment due to it. They have been familiarized with it from their infancy, cuſtom has rendered it habitual to them, and they are very apt to regard it as, what is called, the way of the world, ſomething which either may, or muſt be practiſed, to hinder us from being the dupes of our own integrity.

Faſhion too will ſometimes give reputation to a certain degree of diſorder, and, on the contrary, diſcountenance qualities which deſerve eſteem. In the reign of Charles II. a degree of licentiouſneſs was deemed the characteriſtic of

of a liberal education. It was connected, according to the notions of thofe times, with generofity, fincerity, magnanimity, loyalty, and proved that the perfon who acted in this manner, was a gentleman, and not a puritan. Severity of manners, and regularity of conduct, on the other hand, were altogether unfafhionable, and were connected, in the imagination of that age, with cant, cunning, hypocrify, and low manners. To fuperficial minds, the vices of the great feem at all times agreeable. They connect them, not only with the fplendour of fortune, but with many fuperior virtues, which they afcribe to their fuperiors; with the fpirit of freedom and independency, with franknefs, generofity, humanity, and politenefs. The virtues of the inferior ranks of people, on the contrary, their parfimonious frugality, their painful induftry, and rigid adherence to rules, feem to them mean and difagreeable. They connect them, both with the meannefs of the ftation to which thofe qualities commonly belong, and with many great vices which, they fuppofe, ufually accompany them; fuch as an abject, cowardly, ill-natured, lying, pilfering difpofition.

The objects with which men in the different profeffions and ftates of life are converfant, being very different, and habituating them to very different paffions, naturally form in them very different characters and manners. We expect in each rank and profeffion, a degree of thofe manners, which, experience has taught us, belong to it. But as in each fpecies of things,

we

PART V.

we are particularly pleaſed with the middle conformation, which, in every part and feature, agrees moſt exactly with the general ſtandard which nature ſeems to have eſtabliſhed for things of that kind; ſo in each rank, or, if I may ſay ſo, in each ſpecies of men, we are particularly pleaſed, if they have neither too much, nor too little of the character which uſually accompanies their particular condition and ſituation. A man, we ſay, ſhould look like his trade and profeſſion; yet the pedantry of every profeſſion is diſagreeable. The different periods of life have, for the ſame reaſon, different manners aſſigned to them. We expect in old age, that gravity and ſedateneſs which its infirmities, its long experience, and its worn-out ſenſibility ſeem to render both natural and reſpectable; and we lay our account to find in youth that ſenſibility, that gaiety and ſprightly vivacity which experience teaches us to expect from the lively impreſſions that all intereſting objects are apt to make upon the tender and unpractiſed ſenſes of that early period of life. Each of thoſe two ages, however, may eaſily have too much of theſe peculiarities which belong to it. The flirting levity of youth, and the immovable inſenſibility of old age, are equally diſagreeable. The young, according to the common ſaying, are moſt agreeable when in their behaviour there is ſomething of the manners of the old, and the old, when they retain ſomething of the gaiety of the young. Either of them, however, may eaſily have too much of the manners of the

the other. The extreme coldneſs, and dull formality, which are pardoned in old age, make youth ridiculous. The levity, the careleſſneſs, and the vanity, which are indulged in youth, render old age contemptible.

The peculiar character and manners which we are led by cuſtom to appropriate to each rank and profeſſion, have ſometimes perhaps a propriety independent of cuſtom; and are what we ſhould approve of for their own ſakes, if we took into conſideration all the different circumſtances which naturally affect thoſe in each different ſtate of life. The propriety of a perſon's behaviour, depends not upon its ſuitableneſs to any one circumſtance of his ſituation, but to all the circumſtances, which, when we bring his caſe home to ourſelves, we feel, ſhould naturally call upon his attention. If he appears to be ſo much occupied by any one of them, as entirely to neglect the reſt, we diſapprove of his conduct, as ſomething which we cannot entirely go along with, becauſe not properly adjuſted to all the circumſtances of his ſituation: Yet, perhaps, the emotion he expreſſes for the object which principally intereſts him, does not exceed what we ſhould entirely ſympathize with, and approve of, in one whoſe attention was not required by any other thing. A parent in private life might, upon the loſs of an only ſon, expreſs without blame a degree of grief and tenderneſs, which would be unpardonable in a general at the head of an army, when glory, and the public ſafety, demanded ſo great a part

of

PART V. of his attention. As different objects ought, upon common occasions, to occupy the attention of men of different professions, so different passions ought naturally to become habitual to them; and when we bring home to ourselves their situation in this particular respect, we must be sensible, that every occurrence should naturally affect them more or less, according as the emotion which it excites, coincides or disagrees with the fixt habit and temper of their minds. We cannot expect the same sensibility to the gay pleasures and amusements of life in a clergyman, which we lay our account with in an officer. The man whose peculiar occupation it is to keep the world in mind of that awful futurity which awaits them, who is to announce what may be the fatal consequences of every deviation from the rules of duty, and who is himself to set the example of the most exact conformity, seems to be the messenger of tidings, which cannot, in propriety, be delivered either with levity or indifference. His mind is supposed to be continually occupied with what is too grand and solemn, to leave any room for the impressions of those frivolous objects, which fill up the attention of the dissipated and the gay. We readily feel therefore, that, independent of custom, there is a propriety in the manners which custom has allotted to this profession; and that nothing can be more suitable to the character of a clergyman, than that grave, that austere and abstracted severity, which we are habituated to expect in his behaviour.

These reflections are so very obvious, that there is scarce any man so inconsiderate, as not, at some time, to have made them, and to have accounted to himself in this manner for his approbation of the usual character of this order. CHAP. II.

The foundation of the customary character of some other professions is not so obvious, and our approbation of it is founded entirely in habit, without being either confirmed, or enlivened by any reflections of this kind. We are led by custom, for example, to annex the character of gaiety, levity, and sprightly freedom, as well as of some degree of dissipation, to the military profession. Yet, if we were to consider what mood or tone of temper would be most suitable to this situation, we should be apt to determine, perhaps, that the most serious and thoughtful turn of mind would best become those whose lives are continually exposed to uncommon danger, and who should therefore be more constantly occupied with the thoughts of death and its consequences than other men. It is this very circumstance, however, which is not improbably the occasion why the contrary turn of mind prevails so much among men of this profession. It requires so great an effort to conquer the fear of death, when we survey it with steadiness and attention, that those who are constantly exposed to it, find it easier to turn away their thoughts from it altogether, to wrap themselves up in careless security and indifference, and to plunge themselves, for this purpose, into every sort of amusement and dissipa-

PART V. tion. A camp is not the element of a thoughtful or a melancholy man: persons of that cast, indeed, are often abundantly determined, and are capable, by a great effort, of going on with inflexible resolution to the most unavoidable death. But to be exposed to continual, though less imminent danger, to be obliged to exert, for a long time, a degree of this effort, exhausts and depresses the mind, and renders it incapable of all happiness and enjoyment. The gay and careless, who have occasion to make no effort at all, who fairly resolve never to look before them, but to lose in continual pleasures and amusements all anxiety about their situation, more easily support such circumstances. Whenever, by any peculiar circumstances, an officer has no reason to lay his account with being exposed to any uncommon danger, he is very apt to lose the gaiety and dissipated thoughtlessness of his character. The captain of a city guard is commonly as sober, careful, and penurious an animal as the rest of his fellow-citizens. A long peace is, for the same reason, very apt to diminish the difference between the civil and the military character. The ordinary situation, however, of men of this profession, renders gaiety, and a degree of dissipation, so much their usual character; and custom has, in our imagination, so strongly connected this character with this state of life, that we are very apt to despise any man, whose peculiar humour or situation renders him incapable of acquiring it. We laugh at the grave and careful faces of

a city

a city guard, which ſo little reſemble thoſe of their profeſſion. They themſelves ſeem often to be aſhamed of the regularity of their own manners, and, not to be out of the faſhion of their trade, are fond of affecting that levity, which is by no means natural to them. Whatever is the deportment which we have been accuſtomed to ſee in a reſpectable order of men, it comes to be ſo aſſociated in our imagination with that order, that whenever we ſee the one, we lay our account that we are to meet with the other, and when diſappointed, miſs ſomething which we expected to find. We are embarraſſed, and put to a ſtand, and know not how to addreſs ourſelves to a character, which plainly affects to be of a different ſpecies from thoſe with which we ſhould have been diſpoſed to claſs it.

The different ſituations of different ages and countries are apt, in the ſame manner, to give different characters to the generality of thoſe who live in them, and their ſentiments concerning the particular degree of each quality, that is either blamable or praiſe-worthy, vary, according to that degree which is uſual in their own country, and in their own times. That degree of politeneſs, which would be highly eſteemed, perhaps, would be thought effeminate adulation, in Ruſſia, would be regarded as rudeneſs and barbariſm at the court of France. That degree of order and frugality, which, in a Poliſh nobleman, would be conſidered as exceſſive parſimony, would be regarded as extravagance in a citizen

PART V. of Amsterdam. Every age and country look upon that degree of each quality, which is commonly to be met with in those who are esteemed among themselves, as the golden mean of that particular talent or virtue. And as this varies, according as their different circumstances render different qualities more or less habitual to them, their sentiments concerning the exact propriety of character and behaviour vary accordingly.

Among civilized nations, the virtues which are founded upon humanity, are more cultivated than those which are founded upon self-denial and the command of the passions. Among rude and barbarous nations, it is quite otherwise, the virtues of self-denial are more cultivated than those of humanity. The general security and happiness which prevail in ages of civility and politeness, afford little exercise to the contempt of danger, to patience in enduring labour, hunger, and pain. Poverty may easily be avoided, and the contempt of it therefore almost ceases to be a virtue. The abstinence from pleasure becomes less necessary, and the mind is more at liberty to unbend itself, and to indulge its natural inclinations in all those particular respects.

Among savages and barbarians it is quite otherwise. Every savage undergoes a sort of Spartan discipline, and by the necessity of his situation is inured to every sort of hardship. He is in continual danger: he is often exposed to the greatest extremities of hunger, and frequently dies of pure want. His circumstances

not

t only habituate him to every ſort of diſtreſs, : teach him to give way to none of the paſ- ns which that diſtreſs is apt to excite. He ı expect from his countrymen no ſympathy or lulgence for ſuch weakneſs. Before we can l much for others, we muſt in ſome meaſure at eaſe ourſelves. If our own miſery pinches very ſeverely, we have no leiſure to attend that of our neighbour: and all ſavages are ı much occupied with their own wants and ceſſities, to give much attention to thoſe of other perſon. A ſavage, therefore, whatever the nature of his diſtreſs, expects no ſympa- r from thoſe about him, and diſdains, upon ıt account, to expoſe himſelf, by allowing the ſt weakneſs to eſcape him. His paſſions, how ious and violent ſoever, are never permitted diſturb the ſerenity of his countenance or ɜ compoſure of his conduct and behaviour. ıe ſavages in North America, we are told, ıme upon all occaſions the greateſt indiffe- ıce, and would think themſelves degraded if ey ſhould ever appear in any reſpect to be ercome, either by love, or grief, or reſent- ent. Their magnanimity and ſelf-command, this reſpect, are almoſt beyond the concep- n of Europeans. In a country in which all en are upon a level, with regard to rank and tune, it might be expected that the mutual clinations of the two parties ſhould be the ly thing conſidered in marriages, and ſhould indulged without any ſort of control. This, wever, is the country in which all marriages,

PART V.

without exception, are made up by the parents, and in which a young man would think himſelf diſgraced for ever, if he ſhewed the leaſt preference of one woman above another, or did not expreſs the moſt complete indifference, both about the time when, and the perſon to whom, he was to be married. The weakneſs of love, which is ſo much indulged in ages of humanity and politeneſs, is regarded among ſavages as the moſt unpardonable effeminacy. Even after the marriage, the two parties ſeem to be aſhamed of a connexion which is founded upon ſo ſordid a neceſſity. They do not live together. They ſee one another by ſtealth only. They both continue to dwell in the houſes of their reſpective fathers, and the open cohabitation of the two ſexes, which is permitted without blame in all other countries, is here conſidered as the moſt indecent and unmanly ſenſuality. Nor is it only over this agreeable paſſion that they exert this abſolute ſelf-command. They often bear, in the ſight of all their countrymen, with injuries, reproach, and the groſſeſt inſults, with the appearance of the greateſt inſenſibility, and without expreſſing the ſmalleſt reſentment. When a ſavage is made priſoner of war, and receives, as is uſual, the ſentence of death from his conquerors, he hears it without expreſſing any emotion, and afterwards ſubmits to the moſt dreadful torments, without ever bemoaning himſelf, or diſcovering any other paſſion but contempt of his enemies. While he is hung by the ſhoulders over a ſlow fire, he derides his tormentors,

tormentors, and tells them with how much more ingenuity he himſelf had tormented ſuch of their countrymen as had fallen into his hands. After he has been ſcorched and burnt, and lacerated in all the moſt tender and ſenſible parts of his body for ſeveral hours together, he is often allowed, in order to prolong his miſery, a ſhort reſpite, and is taken down from the ſtake: he employs this interval in talking upon all indifferent ſubjects, inquires after the news of the country, and ſeems indifferent about nothing but his own ſituation. The ſpectators expreſs the ſame inſenſibility; the ſight of ſo horrible an object ſeems to make no impreſſion upon them; they ſcarce look at the priſoner, except when they lend a hand to torment him. At other times they ſmoke tobacco, and amuſe themſelves with any common object, as if no ſuch matter was going on. Every ſavage is ſaid to prepare himſelf from his earlieſt youth for this dreadful end. He compoſes, for this purpoſe, what they call the ſong of death, a ſong which he is to ſing when he has fallen into the hands of his enemies, and is expiring under the tortures which they inflict upon him. It conſiſts of inſults upon his tormentors, and expreſſes the higheſt contempt of death and pain. He ſings this ſong upon all extraordinary occaſions, when he goes out to war, when he meets his enemies in the field, or whenever he has a mind to ſhow that he has familiariſed his imagination to the moſt dreadful misfortunes, and that no human event can daunt his reſolution, or alter

PART V. his purpoſe. The ſame contempt of death and torture prevails among all other ſavage nations. There is not a negro from the coaſt of Africa, who does not, in this reſpect, poſſeſs a degree of magnanimity which the ſoul of his ſordid maſter is too often ſcarce capable of conceiving. Fortune never exerted more cruelly her empire over mankind, than when ſhe ſubjected thoſe nations of heroes to the refuſe of the jails of Europe, to wretches who poſſeſs the virtues neither of the countries which they come from, nor of thoſe which they go to, and whoſe levity, brutality, and baſeneſs, ſo juſtly expoſe them to the contempt of the vanquiſhed.

This heroic and unconquerable firmneſs, which the cuſtom and education of his country demand of every ſavage, is not required of thoſe who are brought up to live in civilized ſocieties. If theſe laſt complain when they are in pain, if they grieve when they are in diſtreſs, if they allow themſelves either to be overcome by love, or to be diſcompoſed by anger, they are eaſily pardoned. Such weakneſſes are not apprehended to affect the eſſential parts of their character. As long as they do not allow themſelves to be tranſported to do any thing contrary to juſtice or humanity, they loſe but little reputation, though the ſerenity of their countenance, or the compoſure of their diſcourſe and behaviour, ſhould be ſomewhat ruffled and diſturbed. A humane and poliſhed people, who have more ſenſibility to the paſſions of others, can more readily enter into an animated and

paſſionate

paſſionate behaviour, and can more eaſily pardon ſome little exceſs. The perſon principally concerned is ſenſible of this; and being aſſured of the equity of his judges, indulges himſelf in ſtronger expreſſions of paſſion, and is leſs afraid of expoſing himſelf to their contempt by the violence of his emotions. We can venture to expreſs more emotion in the preſence of a friend than in that of a ſtranger, becauſe we expect more indulgence from the one than from the other. And in the ſame manner the rules of decorum among civilized nations, admit of a more animated behaviour, than is approved of among barbarians. The firſt converſe together with the openneſs of friends; the ſecond with the reſerve of ſtrangers. The emotion and vivacity with which the French and the Italians, the two moſt poliſhed nations upon the continent, expreſs themſelves on occaſions that are at all intereſting, ſurpriſe at firſt thoſe ſtrangers who happen to be travelling among them, and who, having been educated among a people of duller ſenſibility, cannot enter into this paſſionate behaviour, of which they have never ſeen any example in their own country. A young French nobleman will weep in the preſence of the whole court upon being refuſed a regiment. An Italian, ſays the Abbot Dû Bos, expreſſes more emotion on being condemned in a fine of twenty ſhillings, than an Engliſhman on receiving the ſentence of death. Cicero, in the times of the higheſt Roman politeneſs, could, without degrading himſelf, weep with all the bitterneſs

of

PART V. of ſorrow in the ſight of the whole ſenate and the whole people; as it is evident he muſt have done in the end of almoſt every oration. The orators of the earlier and ruder ages of Rome could not probably, conſiſtent with the manners of the times, have expreſſed themſelves with ſo much emotion. It would have been regarded, I ſuppoſe, as a violation of nature and propriety in the Scipios, in the Leliuſes, and in the elder Cato, to have expoſed ſo much tenderneſs to the view of the public. Thoſe ancient warriors could expreſs themſelves with order, gravity, and good judgment: but are ſaid to have been ſtrangers to that ſublime and paſſionate eloquence which was firſt introduced into Rome, not many years before the birth of Cicero, by the two Gracchi, by Craſſus, and by Sulpitius. This animated eloquence, which has been long practiſed, with or without ſucceſs, both in France and Italy, is but juſt beginning to be introduced into England. So wide is the difference between the degrees of ſelf-command which are required in civilized and in barbarous nations, and by ſuch different ſtandards do they judge of the propriety of behaviour.

This difference gives occaſion to many others that are not leſs eſſential. A poliſhed people being accuſtomed to give way, in ſome meaſure, to the movements of nature, become frank, open, and ſincere. Barbarians, on the contrary, being obliged to ſmother and conceal the appearance of every paſſion, neceſſarily acquire the habits of falſehood and diſſimulation. It is obſerved

observed by all those who have been conversant with savage nations, whether in Asia, Africa, or America, that they are all equally impenetrable, and that, when they have a mind to conceal the truth, no examination is capable of drawing it from them. They cannot be trepanned by the most artful questions. The torture itself is incapable of making them confess any thing which they have no mind to tell. The passions of a savage too, though they never express themselves by any outward emotion, but lie concealed in the breast of the sufferer, are, notwithstanding, all mounted to the highest pitch of fury. Though he seldom shows any symptoms of anger, yet his vengeance, when he comes to give way to it, is always sanguinary and dreadful. The least affront drives him to despair. His countenance and discourse indeed are still sober and composed, and express nothing but the most perfect tranquillity of mind: but his actions are often the most furious and violent. Among the North-Ame icans it is not uncommon for persons of the tendereſt age and more fearful sex to drown themselves upon receiving only a slight reprimand from their mothers, and this too without expressing any passion, or saying any thing, except, *you shall no longer have a daughter*. In civilized nations the passions of men are not commonly so furious or so desperate. They are often clamorous and noisy, but are seldom very hurtful; and seem frequently to aim at no other satisfaction, but that of convincing the spectator, that they are

in

PART V. in the right to be ſo much moved, and of procuring his ſympathy and approbation.

All theſe effects of cuſtom and faſhion, however, upon the moral ſentiments of mankind, are inconſiderable, in compariſon of thoſe which they give occaſion to in ſome other caſes; and it is not concerning the general ſtyle of character and behaviour, that thoſe principles produce the greateſt perverſion of judgment, but concerning the propriety or impropriety of particular uſages.

The different manners which cuſtom teaches us to approve of in the different profeſſions and ſtates of life, do not concern things of the greateſt importance. We expect truth and juſtice from an old man as well as from a young, from a clergyman as well as from an officer; and it is in matters of ſmall moment only that we look for the diſtinguiſhing marks of their reſpective characters. With regard to theſe too, there is often ſome unobſerved circumſtance which, if it was attended to, would ſhow us, that, independent of cuſtom, there was a propriety in the character which cuſtom had taught us to allot to each profeſſion. We cannot complain, therefore, in this caſe, that the perverſion of natural ſentiment is very great. Though the manners of different nations require different degrees of the ſame quality, in the character which they think worthy of eſteem, yet the worſt that can be ſaid to happen even here, is that the duties of one virtue are ſometimes extended ſo as to encroach a little upon the

he precincts of some other. The rustic hospitality that is in fashion among the Poles encroaches, perhaps, a little upon œconomy and good order; and the frugality that is esteemed in Holland, upon generosity and good-fellowship. The hardiness demanded of savages diminishes their humanity; and, perhaps, the delicate sensibility required in civilized nations, sometimes destroys the masculine firmness of the character. In general, the style of manners which takes place in any nation, may commonly upon the whole be said to be that which is most suitable to its situation. Hardiness is the character most suitable to the circumstances of a savage; sensibility to those of one who lives in a very civilized society. Even here, therefore, we cannot complain that the moral sentiments of men are very grossly perverted.

It is not therefore in the general style of conduct or behaviour that custom authorises the widest departure from what is the natural propriety of action. With regard to particular usages, its influence is often much more destructive of good morals, and it is capable of establishing, as lawful and blameless, particular actions, which shock the plainest principles of right and wrong.

Can there be greater barbarity, for example, than to hurt an infant? Its helplessness, its innocence, its amiableness, call forth the compassion, even of an enemy, and not to spare that tender age is regarded as the most furious effort of an enraged and cruel conqueror. What then should

we

PART V. we imagine muſt be the heart of a parent who could injure that weakneſs which even a furious enemy is afraid to violate? Yet the expoſition, that is, the murder of new-born infants, was a practice allowed of in almoſt all the ſtates of Greece, even among the polite and civilized Athenians; and whenever the circumſtances of the parent rendered it inconvenient to bring up the child, to abandon it to hunger, or to wild beaſts, was regarded without blame or cenſure. This practice had probably begun in times of the moſt ſavage barbarity. The imaginations of men had been firſt made familiar with it in that earlieſt period of ſociety, and the uniform continuance of the cuſtom had hindered them afterwards from perceiving its enormity. We find, at this day, that this practice prevails among all ſavage nations; and in that rudeſt and loweſt ſtate of ſociety it is undoubtedly more pardonable than in any other. The extreme indigence of a ſavage is often ſuch that he himſelf is frequently expoſed to the greateſt extremity of hunger, he often dies of pure want, and it is frequently impoſſible for him to ſupport both himſelf and his child. We cannot wonder, therefore, that in this caſe he ſhould abandon it. One who, in flying from an enemy, whom it was impoſſible to reſiſt, ſhould throw down his infant, becauſe it retarded his flight, would ſurely be excuſable; ſince, by attempting to ſave it, he could only hope for the conſolation of dying with it. That in this ſtate of ſociety, therefore, a parent ſhould be allowed to judge whether he can bring up his child,

child, ought not to ſurpriſe us ſo greatly. In the latter ages of Greece, however, the ſame thing was permitted from views of remote intereſt or conveniency, which could by no means excuſe it. Uninterrupted cuſtom had by this time ſo thoroughly authoriſed the practice, that not only the looſe maxims of the world tolerated this barbarous prerogative, but even the doctrine of philoſophers, which ought to have been more juſt and accurate, was led away by the eſtabliſhed cuſtom, and upon this, as upon many other occaſions, inſtead of cenſuring, ſupported the horrible abuſe, by far-fetched conſiderations of public utility. Ariſtotle talks of it as of what the magiſtrate ought upon many occaſions to encourage. The humane Plato is of the ſame opinion, and, with all that love of mankind which ſeems to animate all his writings, no where marks this practice with diſapprobation. When cuſtom can give ſanction to ſo dreadful a violation of humanity, we may well imagine that there is ſcarce any particular practice ſo groſs which it cannot authoriſe. Such a thing, we hear men every day ſaying, is commonly done, and they ſeem to think this a ſufficient apology for what, in itſelf, is the moſt unjuſt and unreaſonable conduct.

There is an obvious reaſon why cuſtom ſhould never pervert our ſentiments with regard to the general ſtyle and character of conduct and behaviour, in the ſame degree as with regard to the propriety or unlawfulneſs of particular uſages. There never can be any ſuch cuſtom.

PART V. No ſociety could ſubſiſt a moment, in which the uſual ſtrain of men's conduct and behaviour was of a piece with the horrible practice I have juſt now mentioned.

THE

THEORY

OF

MORAL SENTIMENTS.

PART VI.

Of the CHARACTER of VIRTUE.

Consisting of Three Sections.

INTRODUCTION.

WHEN we consider the character of any individual, we naturally view it under wo different aspects; first, as it may affect his wn happiness; and secondly, as it may affect iat of other people.

SECTION I.

F THE CHARACTER OF THE INDIVIDUAL, SO FAR AS IT AFFECTS HIS OWN HAPPINESS; OR OF PRUDENCE.

THE preservation and healthful state of the body seem to be the objects which Nature rst recommends to the care of every individual. SECT. I.

 The

PART VI. The appetites of hunger and thirſt, the agreeable or diſagreeable ſenſations of pleaſure and pain, of heat and cold, &c. may be conſidered as leſſons delivered by the voice of Nature herſelf, directing him what he ought to chuſe, and what he ought to avoid, for this purpoſe. The firſt leſſons which he is taught by thoſe to whom his childhood is entruſted, tend, the greater part of them, to the *ſame* purpoſe. Their principal object is to teach him how to keep out of harm's way.

As he grows up, he ſoon learns that ſome care and foreſight are neceſſary for providing the means of gratifying thoſe natural appetites, of procuring pleaſure and avoiding pain, of procuring the agreeable and avoiding the diſagreeable temperature of heat and cold. In the proper direction of this care and foreſight conſiſts the art of preſerving and increaſing what is called his external fortune.

Though it is in order to ſupply the neceſſities and conveniences of the body, that the advantages of external fortune are originally recommended to us, yet we cannot live long in the world without perceiving that the reſpect of our equals, our credit and rank in the ſociety we live in, depend very much upon the degree in which we poſſeſs, or are ſuppoſed to poſſeſs, thoſe advantages. The deſire of becoming the proper objects of this reſpect, of deſerving and obtaining this credit and rank among our equals, is, perhaps, the ſtrongeſt of all our deſires, and our anxiety to obtain the advantages of fortune

is

is accordingly much more excited and irritated by this desire, than by that of supplying all the necessities and conveniencies of the body, which are always very easily supplied.

SECT I.

Our rank and credit among our equals, too, depend very much upon, what, perhaps, a virtuous man would wish them to depend entirely, our character and conduct, or upon the confidence, esteem, and good-will, which these naturally excite in the people we live with.

The care of the health, of the fortune, of the rank and reputation of the individual, the objects upon which his comfort and happiness in this life are supposed principally to depend, is considered as the proper business of that virtue which is commonly called Prudence.

We suffer more, it has already been observed, when we fall from a better to a worse situation, than we ever enjoy when we rise from a worse to a better. Security, therefore, is the first and the principal object of prudence. It is averse to expose our health, our fortune, our rank, or reputation, to any sort of hazard. It is rather cautious than enterprising, and more anxious to preserve the advantages which we already possess, than forward to prompt us to the acquisition of still greater advantages. The methods of improving our fortune, which it principally recommends to us, are those which expose to no loss or hazard; real knowledge and skill in our trade or profession, assiduity and industry in the exercise of it, frugality, and even some degree of parsimony, in all our expences.

PART VI.

The prudent man always ſtudies ſeriouſly and earneſtly to underſtand whatever he profeſſes to underſtand, and not merely to perſuade other people that he underſtands it; and though his talents may not always be very brilliant, they are always perfectly genuine. He neither endeavours to impoſe upon you by the cunning devices of an artful impoſtor, nor by the arrogant airs of an aſſuming pedant, nor by the confident aſſertions of a ſuperficial and impudent pretender. He is not oſtentatious even of the abilities which he really poſſeſſes. His converſation is ſimple and modeſt, and he is averſe to all the quackiſh arts by which other people ſo frequently thruſt themſelves into public notice and reputation. For reputation in his profeſſion he is naturally diſpoſed to rely a good deal upon the ſolidity of his knowledge and abilities; and he does not always think of cultivating the favour of thoſe little clubs and cabals, who, in the ſuperior arts and ſciences, ſo often erect themſelves into the ſupreme judges of merit; and who make it their buſineſs to celebrate the talents and virtues of one another, and to decry whatever can come into competition with them. If he ever connects himſelf with any ſociety of this kind, it is merely in ſelf-defence, not with a view to impoſe upon the public, but to hinder the public from being impoſed upon, to his diſadvantage, by the clamours, the whiſpers, or the intrigues, either of that particular ſociety, or of ſome other of the ſame kind.

The

The prudent man is always sincere, and feels horror at the very thought of exposing himself to the disgrace which attends upon the detection of falsehood. But though always sincere, he is not always frank and open; and though he never tells any thing but the truth, he does not always think himself bound, when not properly called upon, to tell the whole truth. As he is cautious in his actions, so he is reserved in his speech; and never rashly or unnecessarily obtrudes his opinion concerning either things or persons.

The prudent man, though not always distinguished by the most exquisite sensibility, is always very capable of friendship. But his friendship is not that ardent and passionate, but too often transitory affection, which appears so delicious to the generosity of youth and inexperience. It is a sedate, but steady and faithful attachment to a few well-tried and well-chosen companions; in the choice of whom he is not guided by the giddy admiration of shining accomplishments, but by the sober esteem of modesty, discretion, and good conduct. But though capable of friendship, he is not always much disposed to general sociality. He rarely frequents, and more rarely figures in those convivial societies which are distinguished for the ollity and gaiety of their conversation. Their way of life might too often interfere with the regularity of his temperance, might interrupt the steadiness of his industry, or break in upon the strictness of his frugality.

PART VI.

But though his converſation may not always be very ſprightly or diverting, it is always perfectly inoffenſive. He hates the thought of being guilty of any petulance or rudeneſs. He never aſſumes impertinently over any body, and, upon all common occaſions, is willing to place himſelf rather below than above his equals. Both in his conduct and converſation, he is an exact obſerver of decency, and reſpects with an almoſt religious ſcrupuloſity, all the eſtabliſhed decorums and ceremonials of ſociety. And, in this reſpect, he ſets a much better example than has frequently been done by men of much more ſplendid talents and virtues; who, in all ages, from that of Socrates and Ariſtippus, down to that of Dr. Swift and Voltaire, and from that of Philip and Alexander the Great, down to that of the great Czar Peter of Moſcovy, have too often diſtinguiſhed themſelves by the moſt improper and even inſolent contempt of all the ordinary decorums of life and converſation, and who have thereby ſet the moſt pernicious example to thoſe who wiſh to reſemble them, and who too often content themſelves with imitating their follies, without even attempting to attain their perfections.

In the ſteadineſs of his induſtry and frugality, in his ſteadily ſacrificing the eaſe and enjoyment of the preſent moment for the probable expectation of the ſtill greater eaſe and enjoyment of a more diſtant but more laſting period of time, the prudent man is always both ſupported and rewarded by the entire approbation of the impar-

tial,

SECT. I.

ſpectator, and of the repreſentative of the
ırtial ſpectator, the man within the breaſt.
impartial ſpectator does not feel himſelf worn
›y the preſent labour of thoſe whoſe conduct
ürveys; nor does he feel himſelf ſolicited
he importunate calls of their preſent appe-
. To him their preſent, and what is likely
ɜ their future ſituation, are very nearly the
:: he ſees them nearly at the ſame diſtance,
is affected by them very nearly in the ſame
ner. He knows, however, that to the
›ns principally concerned, they are very far
ı being the ſame, and that they naturally
t *them* in a very different manner. He
ıot therefore but approve, and even ap-
d, that proper exertion of ſelf-command,
:h enables them to act as if their preſent
their future ſituation affected them nearly
ıe ſame manner in which they affect him.
'he man who lives within his income, is
ırally contented with his ſituation, which,
continual, though ſmall accumulations, is
ving better and better every day. He is
›led gradually to relax, both in the rigour of
›arſimony and in the ſeverity of his applica-
; and he feels with double ſatisfaction this
luàl increaſe of eaſe and enjoyment, from
ng felt before the hardſhip which attended
want of them. He has no anxiety to change
›omfortable a ſituation, and does not go in
ſt of new enterpriſes and adventures, which
ht endanger, but could not well increaſe,
ſecure tranquillity which he actually enjoys.

PART VI. If he enters into any new projects or enterprises, they are likely to be well concerted and well prepared. He can never be hurried or drove into them by any necessity, but has always time and leisure to deliberate soberly and coolly concerning what are likely to be their consequences.

The prudent man is not willing to subject himself to any responsibility which his duty does not impose upon him. He is not a bustler in business where he has no concern; is not a meddler in other people's affairs; is not a professed counsellor or adviser, who obtrudes his advice where nobody is asking it. He confines himself, as much as his duty will permit, to his own affairs, and has no taste for that foolish importance which many people wish to derive from appearing to have some influence in the management of those of other people. He is averse to enter into any party disputes, hates faction, and is not always very forward to listen to the voice even of noble and great ambition. When distinctly called upon, he will not decline the service of his country, but he will not cabal in order to force himself into it, and would be much better pleased that the public business were well managed by some other person, than that he himself should have the trouble, and incur the responsibility, of managing it. In the bottom of his heart he would prefer the undisturbed enjoyment of secure tranquillity, not only to all the vain splendour of successful ambition, but to the real and solid glory of performing

rming the greateſt and moſt magnanimous ctions. SECT. L

Prudence, in ſhort, when directed merely to he care of the health, of the fortune, and f the rank and reputation of the individual, hough it is regarded as a moſt reſpectable, and ven in ſome degree, as an amiable and agreeble quality, yet it never is conſidered as one, ither of the moſt endearing, or of the moſt nnobling of the virtues. It commands a cerain cold eſteem, but ſeems not entitled to any ery ardent love or admiration.

Wiſe and judicious conduct, when directed to reater and nobler purpoſes than the care of he health, the fortune, the rank and reputation f the individual, is frequently and very proerly called prudence. We talk of the prulence of the great general, of the great ſtateſnan, of the great legiſlator. Prudence is, in ll theſe caſes, combined with many greater nd more ſplendid virtues, with valour, with xtenſive and ſtrong benevolence, with a ſacred egard to the rules of juſtice, and all theſe ſupported by a proper degree of ſelf-command. This ſuperior prudence, when carried to the igheſt degree of perfection, neceſſarily ſuppoſes the art, the talent, and the habit or diſpoition of acting with the moſt perfect propriety n every poſſible circumſtance and ſituation. It neceſſarily ſuppoſes the utmoſt perfection of all the intellectual and of all the moral virtues. It is the beſt head joined to the beſt heart. It is the moſt perfect wiſdom combined with the

moſt

PART VI. moſt perfect virtue. It conſtitutes very nearly the character of the Academical or Peripatetic ſage, as the inferior prudence does that of the Epicurean.

Mere imprudence, or the mere want of the capacity to take care of one's-ſelf, is, with the generous and humane, the object of compaſſion; with thoſe of leſs delicate ſentiments, of neglect, or, at worſt, of contempt, but never of hatred or indignation. When combined with other vices, however, it aggravates in the higheſt degree the infamy and diſgrace which would otherwiſe attend them. The artful knave, whoſe dexterity and addreſs exempt him, though not from ſtrong ſuſpicions, yet from puniſhment or diſtinct detection, is too often received in the world with an indulgence which he by no means deſerves. The awkward and fooliſh one, who, for want of this dexterity and addreſs, is convicted and brought to puniſhment, is the object of univerſal hatred, contempt, and deriſion. In countries where great crimes frequently paſs unpuniſhed, the moſt atrocious actions become almoſt familiar, and ceaſe to impreſs the people with that horror which is univerſally felt in countries where an exact adminiſtration of juſtice takes place. The injuſtice is the ſame in both countries; but the imprudence is often very different. In the latter, great crimes are evidently great follies. In the former, they are not always conſidered as ſuch. In Italy, during the greater part of the ſixteenth century, aſſaſſinations, murders, and even murders under truſt,

ſeem

to have been almoſt familiar among the ior ranks of people. Cæſar Borgia invited of the little princes in his neighbourhood, ll poſſeſſed little ſovereignties, and com- ed little armies of their own, to a friendly rence at Senigaglia, where, as ſoon as they d, he put them all to death. This infa- action, though certainly not approved of in that age of crimes, ſeems to have con- ted very little to the diſcredit, and not in eaſt to the ruin of the perpetrator. That happened a few years after from cauſes ether diſconnected with this crime. Ma- el, not indeed a man of the niceſt morality for his own times, was reſident, as miniſter the republic of Florence, at the court of r Borgia when this crime was committed. ives a very particular account of it, and in pure, elegant, and ſimple language which guiſhes all his writings. He talks of it coolly; is pleaſed with the addreſs with h Cæſar Borgia conducted it; has much mpt for the dupery and weakneſs of the ers; but no compaſſion for their miſerable ntimely death, and no ſort of indignation e cruelty and falſehood of their murderer. violence and injuſtice of great conquerors ften regarded with fooliſh wonder and ad- ion; thoſe of petty thieves, robbers, and erers, with contempt, hatred, and even r upon all occaſions. The former, though are a hundred times more miſchievous and active, yet when ſucceſsful, they often paſs for

PART VI.

for deeds of the moſt heroic magnanimity. The latter are always viewed with hatred and averſion, as the follies, as well as the crimes, of the loweſt and moſt worthleſs of mankind. The injuſtice of the former is certainly, at leaſt, as great as that of the latter; but the folly and imprudence are not near ſo great. A wicked and worthleſs man of parts often goes through the world with much more credit than he deſerves. A wicked and worthleſs fool appears always, of all mortals, the moſt hateful, as well as the moſt contemptible. As prudence combined with other virtues, conſtitutes the nobleſt; ſo imprudence combined with other vices, conſtitutes the vileſt of all characters.

SECTION II.

HE CHARACTER OF THE INDIVIDUAL, SO : AS IT CAN AFFECT THE HAPPINESS OF IER PEOPLE.

INTRODUCTION.

SECT. II.

IE character of every individual, ſo far as it can affect the happineſs of other people, do ſo by its diſpoſition either to hurt or to it them.

per reſentment for injuſtice attempted, or lly committed, is the only motive which, eyes of the impartial ſpectator, can juſtify urting or diſturbing in any reſpect the neſs of our neighbour. To do ſo from ther motive is itſelf a violation of the laws ſtice, which force ought to be employed to reſtrain or to puniſh. The wiſdom of ſtate or commonwealth endeavours, as it can, to employ the force of the ſociety ſtrain thoſe who are ſubject to its authority, hurting or diſturbing the happineſs of one ier. The rules which it eſtabliſhes for this oſe, conſtitute the civil and criminal law ch particular ſtate or country. The prin- s upon which thoſe rules either are, or t to be founded, are the ſubject of a parti- ſcience, of all ſciences by far the moſt important, but hitherto, perhaps, the leaſt vated, that of natural juriſprudence; con- ing which it belongs not to our preſent ſub- to enter into any detail. A ſacred and

PART VI. religious regard not to hurt or disturb in any respect the happiness of our neighbour, even in those cases where no law can properly protect him, constitutes the character of the perfectly innocent and just man; a character which, when carried to a certain delicacy of attention, is always highly respectable and even venerable for its own sake, and can scarce ever fail to be accompanied with many other virtues, with great feeling for other people, with great humanity and great benevolence. It is a character sufficiently understood, and requires no further explanation. In the present section I shall only endeavour to explain the foundation of that order which nature seems to have traced out for the distribution of our good offices, or for the direction and employment of our very limited powers of beneficence: first, towards individuals; and secondly, towards societies.

The same unerring wisdom, it will be found, which regulates every other part of her conduct, directs, in this respect too, the order of her recommendations; which are always stronger or weaker in proportion as our beneficence is more or less necessary, or can be more or less useful.

CHAP. I.

Of the Order in which Individuals are recommended by Nature to our care and attention.

EVERY man, as the Stoics used to say, is first and principally recommended to his own care; and every man is certainly, in every respect,

ject, fitter and abler to take care of himself n of any other person. Every man feels his ı pleasures and his own pains more sen- y than those of other people. The former the original sensations; the latter the re- ted or sympathetic images of those sensa- ıs. The former may be said to be the sub- ıce; the latter the shadow.

After himself, the members of his own family, se who usually live in the same house with ı, his parents, his children, his brothers and ers, are naturally the objects of his warmest ctions. They are naturally and usually the sons upon whose happiness or misery his con- t must have the greatest influence. He is e habituated to sympathize with them. He ws better how every thing is likely to affect m, and his sympathy with them is more pre- and determinate, than it can be with the ater part of other people. It approaches rer, in short, to what he feels for himself.

This sympathy too, and the affections which founded on it, are by nature more strongly cted towards his children than towards his ents, and his tenderness for the former seems erally a more active principle, than his reve- ce and gratitude towards the latter. In the ıral state of things, it has already been ob- ed, the existence of the child, for some time r it comes into the world, depends altogether n the care of the parent; that of the parent ı not naturally depend upon the care of the d. In the eye of nature, it would seem, a

PART VI.

child is a more important object than an old man; and excites a much more lively, as well as a much more univerſal ſympathy. It ought to do ſo. Every thing may be expected, or at leaſt hoped, from the child. In ordinary caſes, very little can be either expected or hoped from the old man. The weakneſs of childhood intereſts the affections of the moſt brutal and hard-hearted. It is only to the virtuous and humane, that the infirmities of old age are not the objects of contempt and averſion. In ordinary caſes, an old man dies without being much regretted by any body. Scarce a child can die without rending aſunder the heart of ſomebody.

The earlieſt friendſhips, the friendſhips which are naturally contracted when the heart is moſt ſuſceptible of that feeling, are thoſe among brothers and ſiſters. Their good agreement, while they remain in the ſame family, is neceſſary for its tranquillity and happineſs. They are capable of giving more pleaſure or pain to one another than to the greater part of other people. Their ſituation renders their mutual ſympathy of the utmoſt importance to their common happineſs; and, by the wiſdom of nature, the ſame ſituation, by obliging them to accommodate to one another, renders that ſympathy more habitual, and thereby more lively, more diſtinct, and more determinate.

The children of brothers and ſiſters are naturally connected by the friendſhip which, after ſeparating into different families, continues to take place between their parents. Their good agreement

agreement improves the enjoyment of that friendſhip; their diſcord would diſturb it. As they ſeldom live in the ſame family, however, though of more importance to one another, than to the greater part of other people, they are of much leſs than brothers and ſiſters. As their mutual ſympathy is leſs neceſſary, ſo it is leſs habitual, and therefore proportionably weaker. SECT. II.

The children of couſins, being ſtill leſs connected, are of ſtill leſs importance to one another; and the affection gradually diminiſhes as the relation grows more and more remote.

What is called affection, is in reality nothing but habitual ſympathy. Our concern in the happineſs or miſery of thoſe who are the objects of what we call our affections; our deſire to promote the one, and to prevent the other; are either the actual feeling of that habitual ſympathy, or the neceſſary conſequences of that feeling. Relations being uſually placed in ſituations which naturally create this habitual ſympathy, it is expected that a ſuitable degree of affection ſhould take place among them. We generally find that it actually does take place; we therefore naturally expect that it ſhould; and we are, upon that account, more ſhocked when, upon any occaſion, we find that it does not. The general rule is eſtabliſhed, that perſons related to one another in a certain degree, ought always to be affected towards one another in a certain manner, and that there is always the higheſt impropriety, and ſometimes even a ſort of

PART VI.

impiety, in their being affected in a different manner. A parent without parental tenderness, a child devoid of all filial reverence, appear monsters, the objects, not of hatred only, but of horror.

Though in a particular instance, the circumstances which usually produce those natural affections, as they are called, may, by some accident, not have taken place, yet respect for the general rule will frequently, in some measure, supply their place, and produce something which, though not altogether the same, may bear, however, a very considerable resemblance to those affections. A father is apt to be less attached to a child, who, by some accident, has been separated from him in its infancy, and who does not return to him till it is grown up to manhood. The father is apt to feel less paternal tenderness for the child; the child, less filial reverence for the father. Brothers and sisters, when they have been educated in distant countries, are apt to feel a similar diminution of affection. With the dutiful and the virtuous, however, respect for the general rule will frequently produce something which, though by no means the same, yet may very much resemble those natural affections. Even during the separation, the father and the child, the brothers or the sisters, are by no means indifferent to one another. They all consider one another as persons to and from whom certain affections are due, and they live in the hopes of being some time or another in a situation to

enjoy

enjoy that friendſhip which ought naturally to have taken place among perſons ſo nearly connected. Till they meet, the abſent ſon, the abſent brother, are frequently the favourite ſon, the favourite brother. They have never offended, or, if they have, it is ſo long ago, that the offence is forgotten, as ſome childiſh trick not worth the remembering. Every account they have heard of one another, if conveyed by people of any tolerable good nature, has been, in the higheſt degree, flattering and favourable. The abſent ſon, the abſent brother, is not like other ordinary ſons and brothers; but an all-perfect ſon, an all-perfect brother; and the moſt romantic hopes are entertained of the happineſs to be enjoyed in the friendſhip and converſation of ſuch perſons. When they meet, it is often with ſo ſtrong a diſpoſition to conceive that habitual ſympathy which conſtitutes the family affection, that they are very apt to fancy they have actually conceived it, and to behave to one another as if they had. Time and experience, however, I am afraid, too frequently undeceive them. Upon a more familiar acquaintance, they frequently diſcover in one another habits, humours, and inclinations, different from what they expected, to which, from want of habitual ſympathy, from want of the real principle and foundation of what is properly called family-affection, they cannot now eaſily accommodate themſelves. They have never lived in the ſituation which almoſt neceſſarily forces that eaſy accommodation, and though they may now be ſincerely

PART VI.

cerely desirous to assume it, they have really become incapable of doing so. Their familiar conversation and intercourse soon become less pleasing to them, and, upon that account, less frequent. They may continue to live with one another in the mutual exchange of all essential good offices, and with every other external appearance of decent regard. But that cordial satisfaction, that delicious sympathy, that confidential openness and ease, which naturally take place in the conversation of those who have lived long and familiarly with one another, it seldom happens that they can completely enjoy.

It is only, however, with the dutiful and the virtuous, that the general rule has even this slender authority. With the dissipated, the profligate, and the vain, it is entirely disregarded. They are so far from respecting it, that they seldom talk of it but with the most indecent derision; and an early and long separation of this kind never fails to estrange them most completely from one another. With such persons, respect for the general rule can at best produce only a cold and affected civility (a very slender semblance of real regard); and even this, the slightest offence, the smallest opposition of interest, commonly puts an end to altogether.

The education of boys at distant great schools, of young men at distant colleges, of young ladies in distant nunneries and boarding-schools, seems, in the higher ranks of life, to have hurt most essentially the domestic morals, and consequently the domestic happiness, both of France and England.

land. Do you wiſh to educate your children to be dutiful to their parents, to be kind and affectionate to their brothers and ſiſters? put them under the neceſſity of being dutiful children, of being kind and affectionate brothers and ſiſters: educate them in your own houſe. From their parent's houſe, they may, with propriety and advantage, go out every day to attend public ſchools: but let their dwelling be always at home. Reſpect for you muſt always impoſe a very uſeful reſtraint upon their conduct; and reſpect for them may frequently impoſe no uſeleſs reſtraint upon your own. Surely no acquirement, which can poſſibly be derived from what is called a public education, can make any ſort of compenſation for what is almoſt certainly and neceſſarily loſt by it. Domeſtic education is the inſtitution of nature; public education, the contrivance of man. It is ſurely unneceſſary to ſay, which is likely to be the wiſeſt.

SECT. II.

In ſome tragedies and romances, we meet with many beautiful and intereſting ſcenes, founded upon what is called, the force of blood, or upon the wonderful affection which near relations are ſuppoſed to conceive for one another, even before they know that they have any ſuch connection. This force of blood, however, I am afraid, exiſts no where but in tragedies and romances. Even in tragedies and romances, it is never ſuppoſed to take place between any relations, but thoſe who are naturally bred up in the ſame houſe; between parents and children, between brothers and ſiſters.

PART VI.

To imagine any ſuch myſterious affection between couſins, or even between aunts or uncles, and nephews or nieces, would be too ridiculous.

In paſtoral countries, and in all countries where the authority of law is not alone ſufficient to give perfect ſecurity to every member of the ſtate, all the different branches of the ſame family commonly chooſe to live in the neighbourhood of one another. Their aſſociation is frequently neceſſary for their common defence. They are all, from the higheſt to the loweſt, of more or leſs importance to one another. Their concord ſtrengthens their neceſſary aſſociation: their diſcord always weakens, and might deſtroy it. They have more intercourſe with one another, than with the members of any other tribe. The remoteſt members of the ſame tribe claim ſome connection with one another; and, where all other circumſtances are equal, expect to be treated with more diſtinguiſhed attention than is due to thoſe who have no ſuch pretenſions. It is not many years ago that, in the Highlands of Scotland, the Chieftain uſed to conſider the pooreſt man of his clan, as his couſin and relation. The ſame extenſive regard to kindred is ſaid to take place among the Tartars, the Arabs, the Turkomans, and, I believe, among all other nations who are nearly in the ſame ſtate of ſociety in which the Scots Highlanders were about the beginning of the preſent century.

In commercial countries, where the authority of law is always perfectly ſufficient to protect the meaneſt man in the ſtate, the deſcendants

ants of the ſame family, having no ſuch motive for keeping together, naturally ſeparate and diſperſe, as intereſt or inclination may direct. They ſoon ceaſe to be of importance to one another; and, in a few generations, not only loſe all care about one another, but all remembrance of their common origin, and of the connection which took place among their anceſtors. Regard for remote relations becomes, in every country, leſs and leſs, according as this ſtate of civilization has been longer and more completely eſtabliſhed. It has been longer and more completely eſtabliſhed in England than in Scotland; and remote relations are, accordingly, more conſidered in the latter country than in the former, though, in this reſpect, the difference between the two countries is growing leſs and leſs every day. Great lords, indeed, are, in every country, proud of remembering and acknowledging their connection with one another, however remote. The remembrance of ſuch illuſtrious relations flatters not a little the family pride of them all; and it is neither from affection, nor from any thing which reſembles affection, but from the moſt frivolous and childiſh of all vanities, that this remembrance is ſo carefully kept up. Should ſome more humble, though, perhaps, much nearer kinſman, preſume to put ſuch great men in mind of his relation to their family, they ſeldom fail to tell him that they are bad genealogiſts, and miſerably ill-informed concerning their own family hiſtory. It is not in that order, I am afraid, that we are to expect

PART VI.

any extraordinary extenſion of, what is called, natural affection.

I conſider what is called natural affection as more the effect of the moral than of the ſuppoſed phyſical connection between the parent and the child. A jealous huſband, indeed, notwithſtanding the moral connection, notwithſtanding the child's having been educated in his own houſe, often regards, with hatred and averſion, that unhappy child which he ſuppoſes to be the offspring of his wife's infidelity. It is the laſting monument of a moſt diſagreeable adventure; of his own diſhonour, and of the diſgrace of his family.

Among well-diſpoſed people, the neceſſity or conveniency of mutual accommodation, very frequently produces a friendſhip not unlike that which takes place among thoſe who are born to live in the ſame family. Colleagues in office, partners in trade, call one another brothers; and frequently feel towards one another as if they really were ſo. Their good agreement is an advantage to all; and, if they are tolerably reaſonable people, they are naturally diſpoſed to agree. We expect that they ſhould do ſo; and their diſagreement is a ſort of a ſmall ſcandal. The Romans expreſſed this ſort of attachment by the word *neceſſitudo*, which, from the etymology, ſeems to denote that it was impoſed by the neceſſity of the ſituation.

Even the trifling circumſtance of living in the ſame neighbourhood, has ſome effect of the ſame kind. We reſpect the face of a man whom we ſee every day, provided he has never offended us.

us. Neighbours can be very convenient, and they can be very troubleſome, to one another. If they are good ſort of people, they are naturally diſpoſed to agree. We expect their good agreement; and to be a bad neighbour is a very bad character. There are certain ſmall good offices, accordingly, which are univerſally allowed to be due to a neighbour in preference to any other perſon who has no ſuch connection.

This natural diſpoſition to accommodate and to aſſimilate, as much as we can, our own ſentiments, principles, and feelings, to thoſe which we ſee fixed and rooted in the perſons whom we are obliged to live and converſe a great deal with, is the cauſe of the contagious effects of both good and bad company. The man who aſſociates chiefly with the wiſe and the virtuous, though he may not himſelf become either wiſe or virtuous, cannot help conceiving a certain reſpect at leaſt for wiſdom and virtue; and the man who aſſociates chiefly with the profligate and the diſſolute, though he may not himſelf become profligate and diſſolute, muſt ſoon loſe, at leaſt, all his original abhorrence of profligacy and diſſolution of manners. The ſimilarity of family characters, which we ſo frequently ſee tranſmitted through ſeveral ſucceſſive generations, may, perhaps, be partly owing to this diſpoſition, to aſſimilate ourſelves to thoſe whom we are obliged to live and converſe a great deal with. The family character, however, like the family countenance, ſeems to be owing, not altogether to the moral, but partly too to the

PART VI. physical connection. The family countenance is certainly altogether owing to the latter.

But of all attachments to an individual, that which is founded altogether upon esteem and approbation of his good conduct and behaviour, confirmed by much experience and long acquaintance, is, by far, the most respectable. Such friendships, arising not from a constrained sympathy, not from a sympathy which has been assumed and rendered habitual for the sake of convenience and accommodation; but from a natural sympathy, from an involuntary feeling that the persons to whom we attach ourselves are the natural and proper objects of esteem and approbation; can exist only among men of virtue. Men of virtue only can feel that entire confidence in the conduct and behaviour of one another, which can, at all times, assure them that they can never either offend or be offended by one another. Vice is always capricious: virtue only is regular and orderly. The attachment which is founded upon the love of virtue, as it is certainly, of all attachments, the most virtuous; so it is likewise the happiest, as well as the most permanent and secure. Such friendships need not be confined to a single person, but may safely embrace all the wise and virtuous, with whom we have been long and intimately acquainted, and upon whose wisdom and virtue we can, upon that account, entirely depend. They who would confine friendship to two persons, seem to confound the wise security of friendship with the jealousy and folly of love.

The

The hasty, fond, and foolish intimacies of young people, founded, commonly, upon some slight similarity of character, altogether unconnected with good conduct, upon a taste, perhaps, for the same studies, the same amusements, the same diversions, or upon their agreement in some singular principle or opinion, not commonly adopted; those intimacies which a freak begins, and which a freak puts an end to, how agreeable soever they may appear while they last, can by no means deserve the sacred and venerable name of friendship.

Of all the persons, however, whom nature points out for our peculiar beneficence, there are none to whom it seems more properly directed than to those whose beneficence we have ourselves already experienced. Nature, which formed men for that mutual kindness, so necessary for their happiness, renders every man the peculiar object of kindness, to the persons to whom he himself has been kind. Though their gratitude should not always correspond to his beneficence, yet the sense of his merit, the sympathetic gratitude of the impartial spectator, will always correspond to it. The general indignation of other people, against the baseness of their ingratitude, will even, sometimes, increase the general sense of his merit. No benevolent man ever lost altogether the fruits of his benevolence. If he does not always gather them from the persons from whom he ought to have gathered them, he seldom fails to gather them, and with a tenfold increase, from other

T people. Kindneſs is the parent of kindneſs; and if to be beloved by our brethren be the great object of our ambition, the ſureſt way of obtaining it is, by our conduct to ſhow that we really love them.

After the perſons who are recommended to our beneficence, either by their connection with ourſelves, by their perſonal qualities, or by their paſt ſervices, come thoſe who are pointed out, not indeed to, what is called, our friendſhip, but to our benevolent attention and good offices; thoſe who are diſtinguiſhed by their extraordinary ſituation; the greatly fortunate and the greatly unfortunate, the rich and the powerful, the poor and the wretched. The diſtinction of ranks, the peace and order of ſociety, are, in a great meaſure, founded upon the reſpect which we naturally conceive for the former. The relief and conſolation of human miſery depend altogether upon our compaſſion for the latter. The peace and order of ſociety, is of more importance than even the relief of the miſerable. Our reſpect for the great, accordingly, is moſt apt to offend by its exceſs; our fellow-feeling for the miſerable, by its defect. Moraliſts exhort us to charity and compaſſion. They warn us againſt the faſcination of greatneſs. This faſcination, indeed, is ſo powerful, that the rich and the great are too often preferred to the wiſe and the virtuous. Nature has wiſely judged that the diſtinction of ranks, the peace and order of ſociety, reſt more ſecurely upon the plain and palpable difference

of

of birth and fortune, than upon the invisible and often uncertain difference of wisdom and virtue. The undistinguishing eyes of the great mob of mankind can well enough perceive the former: it is with difficulty that the nice discernment of the wise and the virtuous can sometimes distinguish the latter. In the order of all those recommendations, the benevolent wisdom of nature is equally evident.

It may, perhaps, be unnecessary to observe, that the combination of two, or more, of those exciting causes of kindness, increases the kindness. The favour and partiality which, when there is no envy in the case, we naturally bear to greatness, are much increased when it is joined with wisdom and virtue. If, notwithstanding that wisdom and virtue, the great man should fall into those misfortunes, those dangers and distresses, to which the most exalted stations are often the most exposed, we are much more deeply interested in his fortune than we should be in that of a person equally virtuous, but in a more humble situation. The most interesting subjects of tragedies and romances are the misfortunes of virtuous and magnanimous kings and princes. If, by the wisdom and manhood of their exertions, they should extricate themselves from those misfortunes, and recover completely their former superiority and security, we cannot help viewing them with the most enthusiastic and even extravagant admiration. The grief which we felt for their distress, the joy which we feel for their prosperity, seem to combine together

PART VI. together in enhancing that partial admiration which we naturally conceive both for the ſtation and the character.

When thoſe different beneficent affections happen to draw different ways, to determine by any preciſe rules in what caſes we ought to comply with the one, and in what with the other, is, perhaps, altogether impoſſible. In what caſes friendſhip ought to yield to gratitude, or gratitude to friendſhip; in what caſes the ſtrongeſt of all natural affections ought to yield to a regard for the ſafety of thoſe ſuperiors upon whoſe ſafety often depends that of the whole ſociety; and in what caſes natural affection may, without impropriety, prevail over that regard; muſt be left altogether to the deciſion of the man within the breaſt, the ſuppoſed impartial ſpectator, the great judge and arbiter of our conduct. If we place ourſelves completely in his ſituation, if we really view ourſelves with his eyes, and as he views us, and liſten with diligent and reverential attention to what he ſuggeſts to us, his voice will never deceive us. We ſhall ſtand in need of no caſuiſtic rules to direct our conduct. Theſe it is often impoſſible to accommodate to all the different ſhades and gradations of circumſtance, character, and ſituation, to differences and diſtinctions which, though not imperceptible, are, by their nicety and delicacy, often altogether undefinable. In that beautiful tragedy of Voltaire, the Orphan of China, while we admire the magnanimity of Zamti, who is willing to ſacrifice the life of his own child, in order

order to pre n that of the only feeble remnant of his ancient ſovereigns and maſters; we not only pardon, but love the maternal tenderneſs of Idame, who, at the riſque of diſcovering the important ſecret of her huſband, reclaims her infant from the cruel hands of the Tartars, into which it had been delivered.

CHAP. II.

Of the order in which Societies are by nature recommended to our Beneficence.

THE ſame principles that direct the order in which individuals are recommended to our beneficence, direct that likewiſe in which ſocieties are recommended to it. Thoſe to which it is, or may be of moſt importance, are firſt and principally recommended to it.

The ſtate or ſovereignty in which we have been born and educated, and under the protection of which we continue to live, is, in ordinary caſes, the greateſt ſociety upon whoſe happineſs or miſery, our good or bad conduct can have much influence. It is accordingly, by nature, moſt ſtrongly recommended to us. Not only we ourſelves, but all the objects of our kindeſt affections, our children, our parents, our relations, our friends, our benefactors, all thoſe whom we naturally love and revere the moſt, are commonly comprehended within it; and

their

PART VI. their prosperity and safety depend in some measure upon its prosperity and safety. It is by nature, therefore, endeared to us, not only by all our selfish, but by all our private benevolent affections. Upon account of our own connexion with it, its prosperity and glory seem to reflect some sort of honour upon ourselves. When we compare it with other societies of the same kind, we are proud of its superiority, and mortified in some degree, if it appears in any respect below them. All the illustrious characters which it has produced in former times (for against those of our own times envy may sometimes prejudice us a little), its warriors, its statesmen, its poets, its philosophers, and men of letters of all kinds; we are disposed to view with the most partial admiration, and to rank them (sometimes most unjustly) above those of all other nations. The patriot who lays down his life for the safety, or even for the vainglory of this society, appears to act with the most exact propriety. He appears to view himself in the light in which the impartial spectator naturally and necessarily views him, as but one of the multitude, in the eye of that equitable judge, of no more consequence than any other in it, but bound at all times to sacrifice and devote himself to the safety, to the service, and even to the glory of the greater number. But though this sacrifice appears to be perfectly just and proper, we know how difficult it is to make it, and how few people are capable of making it. His conduct, therefore, excites not only our entire

tire approbation, but our higheſt wonder and admiration, and ſeems to merit all the applauſe which can be due to the moſt heroic virtue. The traitor, on the contrary, who, in ſome peculiar ſituation, fancies he can promote his own little intereſt by betraying to the public enemy that of his native country; who, regardleſs of the judgment of the man within the breaſt, prefers himſelf, in this reſpect ſo ſhamefully and ſo baſely, to all thoſe with whom he has any connexion; appears to be of all villains the moſt deteſtable.

The love of our own nation often diſpoſes us to view, with the moſt malignant jealouſy and envy, the proſperity and aggrandiſement of any other neighbouring nation. Independent and neighbouring nations, having no common ſuperior to decide their diſputes, all live in continual dread and ſuſpicion of one another. Each ſovereign, expecting little juſtice from his neighbours, is diſpoſed to treat them with as little as he expects from them. The regard for the laws of nations, or for thoſe rules which independent ſtates profeſs or pretend to think themſelves bound to obſerve in their dealings with one another, is often very little more than mere pretence and profeſſion. From the ſmalleſt intereſt, upon the ſlighteſt provocation, we ſee thoſe rules every day, either evaded or directly violated without ſhame or remorſe. Each nation foreſees or imagines it foreſees, its own ſubjugation in the increaſing power and aggrandiſement of any of its neighbours; and the mean principle

PART VI.

ciple of national prejudice is often founded upon the noble one of the love of our own country. The ſentence with which the elder Cato is ſaid to have concluded every ſpeech which he made in the ſenate, whatever might be the ſubject, "*It is my opinion likewiſe that Carthage* "*ought to be deſtroyed*," was the natural expreſſion of the ſavage patriotiſm of a ſtrong but coarſe mind, enraged almoſt to madneſs againſt a foreign nation from which his own had ſuffered ſo much. The more humane ſentence with which Scipio Naſica is ſaid to have concluded all his ſpeeches, "*It is my opinion likewiſe that Car-* "*thage ought not to be deſtroyed*," was the liberal expreſſion of a more enlarged and enlightened mind, who felt no averſion to the proſperity even of an old enemy, when reduced to a ſtate which could no longer be formidable to Rome. France and England may each of them have ſome reaſon to dread the increaſe of the naval and military power of the other; but for either of them to envy the internal happineſs and proſperity of the other, the cultivation of its lands, the advancement of its manufactures, the increaſe of its commerce, the ſecurity and number of its ports and harbours, its proficiency in all the liberal arts and ſciences, is ſurely beneath the dignity of two ſuch great nations. Theſe are all real improvements of the world we live in. Mankind are benefited, human nature is ennobled by them. In ſuch improvements each nation ought, not only to endeavour itſelf to excel, but from the love of mankind, to promote, inſtead

inſtead of obſtructing the excellence of its neighbours. Theſe are all proper objects of national emulation, not of national prejudice or envy.

The love of our own country ſeems not to be derived from the love of mankind. The former ſentiment is altogether independent of the latter, and ſeems ſometimes even to diſpoſe us to act inconſiſtently with it. France may contain, perhaps, near three times the number of inhabitants which Great Britain contains. In the great ſociety of mankind, therefore, the proſperity of France ſhould appear to be an object of much greater importance than that of Great Britain. The Britiſh ſubject, however, who, upon that account, ſhould prefer upon all occaſions the proſperity of the former to that of the latter country, would not be thought a good citizen of Great Britain. We do not love our country merely as a part of the great ſociety of mankind: we love it for its own ſake, and independently of any ſuch conſideration. That wiſdom which contrived the ſyſtem of human affections, as well as that of every other part of nature, ſeems to have judged that the intereſt of the great ſociety of mankind would be beſt promoted by directing the principal attention of each individual to that particular portion of it, which was moſt within the ſphere both of his abilities and of his underſtanding.

National prejudices and hatreds ſeldom extend beyond neighbouring nations. We very weakly and fooliſhly, perhaps, call the French our natural enemies; and they perhaps, as weakly and

PART VI. foolishly, consider us in the same manner. Neither they nor we bear any sort of envy to the prosperity of China or Japan. It very rarely happens, however, that our good-will towards such distant countries can be exerted with much effect.

The most extensive public benevolence which can commonly be exerted with any considerable effect, is that of the statesmen, who project and form alliances among neighbouring or not very distant nations, for the preservation either of, what is called, the balance of power, or of the general peace and tranquillity of the states within the circle of their negotiations. The statesmen, however, who plan and execute such treaties, have seldom any thing in view, but the interest of their respective countries. Sometimes, indeed, their views are more extensive. The Count d'Avaux, the plenipotentiary of France, at the treaty of Munster, would have been willing to sacrifice his life (according to the Cardinal de Retz, a man not over-credulous in the virtue of other people) in order to have restored, by that treaty, the general tranquillity of Europe. King William seems to have had a real zeal for the liberty and independency of the greater part of the sovereign states of Europe; which, perhaps, might be a good deal stimulated by his particular aversion to France, the state from which, during his time, that liberty and independency were principally in danger. Some share of the same spirit seems to have descended to the first ministry of Queen Anne.

Every

Every independent ſtate is divided into many different orders and ſocieties, each of which has its own particular powers, privileges, and immunities. Every individual is naturally more attached to his own particular order or ſociety, than to any other. His own intereſt, his own vanity, the intereſt and vanity of many of his friends and companions, are commonly a good deal connected with it. He is ambitious to extend its privileges and immunities. He is zealous to defend them againſt the encroachments of every other order or ſociety.

Upon the manner in which any ſtate is divided into the different orders and ſocieties which compoſe it, and upon the particular diſtribution which has been made of their reſpective powers, privileges, and immunities, depends, what is called, the conſtitution of that particular ſtate.

Upon the ability of each particular order or ſociety to maintain its own powers, privileges, and immunities, againſt the encroachments of every other, depends the ſtability of that particular conſtitution. That particular conſtitution is neceſſarily more or leſs altered, whenever any of its ſubordinate parts is either raiſed above or depreſſed below whatever had been its former rank and condition.

All thoſe different orders and ſocieties are dependent upon the ſtate to which they owe their ſecurity and protection. That they are all ſubordinate to that ſtate, and eſtabliſhed only in ſubſerviency to its proſperity and preſervation, is a truth acknowledged by the moſt partial

PART VI. member of every one of them. It may often, however, be hard to convince him that the prosperity and preſervation of the ſtate require any diminution of the powers, privileges, and immunities of his own particular order or ſociety. This partiality, though it may ſometimes be unjuſt, may not, upon that account, be uſeleſs. It checks the ſpirit of innovation. It tends to preſerve whatever is the eſtabliſhed balance among the different orders and ſocieties into which the ſtate is divided; and while it ſometimes appears to obſtruct ſome alterations of government which may be faſhionable and popular at the time, it contributes in reality to the ſtability and permanency of the whole ſyſtem.

The love of our country ſeems, in ordinary caſes, to involve in it two different principles; firſt, a certain reſpect and reverence for that conſtitution or form of government which is actually eſtabliſhed; and ſecondly, an earneſt deſire to render the condition of our fellow-citizens as ſafe, reſpectable, and happy as we can. He is not a citizen who is not diſpoſed to reſpect the laws and to obey the civil magiſtrate; and he is certainly not a good citizen who does not wiſh to promote, by every means in his power, the welfare of the whole ſociety of his fellow citizens.

In peaceable and quiet times, thoſe two principles generally coincide and lead to the ſame conduct. The ſupport of the eſtabliſhed government ſeems evidently the beſt expedient for maintaining the ſafe, reſpectable, and happy ſituation

ſituation of our fellow-citizens; when we ſee that this government actually maintains them in that ſituation. But in times of public diſcontent, faction and diſorder, thoſe two different principles may draw different ways, and even a wiſe man may be diſpoſed to think ſome alteration neceſſary in that conſtitution or form of government, which, in its actual condition, appears plainly unable to maintain the public tranquillity. In ſuch caſes, however, it often requires, perhaps, the higheſt effort of political wiſdom to determine when a real patriot ought to ſupport and endeavour to re-eſtabliſh the authority of the old ſyſtem, and when he ought to give way to the more daring, but often dangerous ſpirit of innovation.

Foreign war and civil faction are the two ſituations which afford the moſt ſplendid opportunities for the diſplay of public ſpirit. The hero who ſerves his country ſucceſsfully in foreign war gratifies the wiſhes of the whole nation, and is, upon that account, the object of univerſal gratitude and admiration. In times of civil diſcord, the leaders of the contending parties, though they may be admired by one half of their fellow-citizens, are commonly execrated by the other. Their characters and the merit of their reſpective ſervices appear commonly more doubtful. The glory which is acquired by foreign war is, upon this account, almoſt always more pure and more ſplendid than that which can be acquired in civil faction.

PART VI.

The leader of the ſucceſsful party, however, if he has authority enough to prevail upon his own friends to act with proper temper and moderation (which he frequently has not), may ſometimes render to his country a ſervice much more eſſential and important than the greateſt victories and the moſt extenſive conqueſts. He may re-eſtabliſh and improve the conſtitution, and from the very doubtful and ambiguous character of the leader of a party, he may aſſume the greateſt and nobleſt of all characters, that of the reformer and legiſlator of a great ſtate; and, by the wiſdom of his inſtitutions, ſecure the internal tranquillity and happineſs of his fellow-citizens for many ſucceeding generations.

Amidſt the turbulence and diſorder of faction, a certain ſpirit of ſyſtem is apt to mix itſelf with that public ſpirit which is founded upon the love of humanity, upon a real fellow-feeling with the inconveniences and diſtreſſes to which ſome of our fellow-citizens may be expoſed. This ſpirit of ſyſtem commonly takes the direction of that more gentle public ſpirit; always animates it, and often inflames it even to the madneſs of fanaticiſm. The leaders of the diſcontented party ſeldom fail to hold out ſome plauſible plan of reformation which, they pretend, will not only remove the inconveniences and relieve the diſtreſſes immediately complained of, but will prevent, in all time coming, any return of the like inconveniences and diſtreſſes. They often propoſe, upon this account, to new model the conſtitution,

conſtitution, and to alter, in ſome of its moſt eſſential parts, that ſyſtem of government under which the ſubjects of a great empire have enjoyed, perhaps, peace, ſecurity, and even glory, during the courſe of ſeveral centuries together. The great body of the party are commonly intoxicated with the imaginary beauty of this ideal ſyſtem, of which they have no experience, but which has been repreſented to them in all the moſt dazzling colours in which the eloquence of their leaders could paint it. Thoſe leaders themſelves, though they originally may have meant nothing but their own aggrandiſement, become many of them in time the dupes of their own ſophiſtry, and are as eager for this great reformation as the weakeſt and fooliſheſt of their followers. Even though the leaders ſhould have preſerved their own heads, as indeed they commonly do, free from this fanaticiſm, yet they dare not always diſappoint the expectation of their followers; but are often obliged, though contrary to their principle and their conſcience, to act as if they were under the common deluſion. The violence of the party, refuſing all palliatives, all temperaments, all reaſonable accommodations, by requiring too much frequently obtains nothing; and thoſe inconveniences and diſtreſſes which, with a little moderation, might in a great meaſure have been removed and relieved, are left altogether without the hope of a remedy.

The man whoſe public ſpirit is prompted altogether by humanity and benevolence, will reſpect

PART VI. the eſtabliſhed powers and privileges even of individuals, and ſtill more thoſe of the great orders and ſocieties, into which the ſtate is divided. Though he ſhould conſider ſome of them as in ſome meaſure abuſive, he will content himſelf with moderating what he often cannot annihilate without great violence. When he cannot conquer the rooted prejudices of the people by reaſon and perſuaſion, he will not attempt to ſubdue them by force; but will religiouſly obſerve what, by Cicero, is juſtly called the divine maxim of Plato, never to uſe violence to his country no more than to his parents. He will accommodate, as well as he can, his public arrangements to the confirmed habits and prejudices of the people; and will remedy as well as he can, the inconveniences which may flow from the want of thoſe regulations which the people are averſe to ſubmit to. When he cannot eſtabliſh the right, he will not diſdain to ameliorate the wrong; but like Solon, when he cannot eſtabliſh the beſt ſyſtem of laws, he will endeavour to eſtabliſh the beſt that the people can bear.

The man of ſyſtem, on the contrary, is apt to be very wiſe in his own conceit; and is often ſo enamoured with the ſuppoſed beauty of his own ideal plan of government, that he cannot ſuffer the ſmalleſt deviation from any part of it. He goes on to eſtabliſh it completely and in all its parts, without any regard either to the great intereſts, or to the ſtrong prejudices which may oppoſe it. He ſeems to imagine that he can arrange the different members of a great ſociety with

with as much eaſe as the hand arranges the different pieces upon a cheſs-board. He does not conſider that the pieces upon the cheſs-board have no other principle of motion beſides that which the hand impreſſes upon them; but that, in the great cheſs board of human ſociety, every ſingle piece has a principle of motion of its own, altogether different from that which the legiſlature might chuſe to impreſs upon it. If thoſe two principles coincide and act in the ſame direction, the game of human ſociety will go on eaſily and harmoniouſly, and is very likely to be happy and ſucceſsful. If they are oppoſite or different, the game will go on miſerably, and the ſociety muſt be at all times in the higheſt degree of diſorder.

Some general, and even ſyſtematical, idea of the perfection of policy and law, may no doubt be neceſſary for directing the views of the ſtateſman. But to inſiſt upon eſtabliſhing, and upon eſtabliſhing all at once, and in ſpite of all oppoſition, every thing which that idea may ſeem to require, muſt often be the higheſt degree of arrogance. It is to erect his own judgment into the ſupreme ſtandard of right and wrong. It is to fancy himſelf the only wiſe and worthy man in the commonwealth, and that his fellow-citizens ſhould accommodate themſelves to him and not he to them. It is upon this account, that of all political ſpeculators, ſovereign princes are by far the moſt dangerous. This arrogance is perfectly familiar to them. They entertain no doubt of the immenſe ſuperiority of their own judgment. When ſuch imperial and royal reformers,

PART VI.

formers, therefore, condescend to contemplate the constitution of the country which is committed to their government, they seldom see any thing so wrong in it as the obstructions which it may sometimes oppose to the execution of their own will. They hold in contempt the divine maxim of Plato, and consider the state as made for themselves, not themselves for the state. The great object of their reformation, therefore, is to remove those obstructions; to reduce the authority of the nobility; to take away the privileges of cities and provinces, and to render both the greatest individuals and the greatest orders of the state, as incapable of opposing their commands, as the weakest and most insignificant.

CHAP. III.

Of universal Benevolence.

THOUGH our effectual good offices can very seldom be extended to any wider society than that of our country; our good-will is circumscribed by no boundary, but may embrace the immensity of the universe. We cannot form the idea of any innocent and sensible being, whose happiness we should not desire, or to whose misery, when distinctly brought home to the imagination, we should not have some degree of aversion. The idea of a mischievous, though sensible,

ensible, being, indeed, naturally provokes our hatred: but the ill-will which, in this case, we bear to it, is really the effect of our universal benevolence. It is the effect of the sympathy which we feel with the misery and resentment of those other innocent and sensible beings, whose happiness is disturbed by its malice.

This universal benevolence, how noble and generous soever, can be the source of no solid happiness to any man who is not thoroughly convinced that all the inhabitants of the universe, the meanest as well as the greatest, are under the immediate care and protection of that great, benevolent, and all-wise Being, who directs all the movements of nature; and who is determined, by his own unalterable perfections, to maintain in it, at all times, the greatest possible quantity of happiness. To this universal benevolence, on the contrary, the very suspicion of a fatherless world, must be the most melancholy of all reflections; from the thought that all the unknown regions of infinite and incomprehensible space may be filled with nothing but endless misery and wretchedness. All the splendour of the highest prosperity can never enlighten the gloom with which so dreadful an idea must necessarily overshadow the imagination; nor, in a wise and virtuous man, can all the sorrow of the most afflicting adversity ever dry up the joy which necessarily springs from the habitual and thorough conviction of the truth of the contrary system.

The

PART VI.

The wiſe and virtuous man is at all times willing that his own private intereſt ſhould be ſacrificed to the public intereſt of his own particular order or ſociety. He is at all times willing, too, that the intereſt of this order or ſociety ſhould be ſacrificed to the greater intereſt of the ſtate or ſovereignty, of which it is only a ſubordinate part. He ſhould, therefore, be equally willing that all thoſe inferior intereſts ſhould be ſacrificed to the greater intereſt of the univerſe, to the intereſt of that great ſociety of all ſenſible and intelligent beings, of which God himſelf is the immediate adminiſtrator and director. If he is deeply impreſſed with the habitual and thorough conviction that this benevolent and all-wiſe Being can admit into the ſyſtem of his government, no partial evil which is not neceſſary for the univerſal good, he muſt conſider all the misfortunes which may befal himſelf, his friends, his ſociety, or his country, as neceſſary for the proſperity of the univerſe, and therefore as what he ought, not only to ſubmit to with reſignation, but as what he himſelf, if he had known all the connexions and dependencies of things, ought ſincerely and devoutly to have wiſhed for.

Nor does this magnanimous reſignation to the will of the great Director of the univerſe, ſeem in any reſpect beyond the reach of human nature. Good ſoldiers, who both love and truſt their General, frequently march with more gaiety and alacrity to the forlorn ſtation, from which

they never expect to return, than they would to one where there was neither difficulty nor danger. In marching to the latter, they could feel no other ſentiment than that of the dulneſs of ordinary duty: in marching to the former, they feel that they are making the nobleſt exertion which it is poſſible for man to make. They know that their general would not have ordered them upon this ſtation, had it not been neceſſary for the ſafety of the army, for the ſucceſs of the war. They cheerfully ſacrifice their own little ſyſtems to the proſperity of a greater ſyſtem. They take an affectionate leave of their comrades, to whom they wiſh all happineſs and ſucceſs; and march out, not only with ſubmiſſive obedience, but often with ſhouts of the moſt joyful exultation, to that fatal, but ſplendid and honourable ſtation to which they are appointed. No conductor of an army can deſerve more unlimited truſt, more ardent and zealous affection, than the great Conductor of the univerſe. In the greateſt public as well as private diſaſters, a wiſe man ought to conſider that he himſelf, his friends and countrymen, have only been ordered upon the forlorn ſtation of the univerſe; that had it not been neceſſary for the good of the whole, they would not have been ſo ordered; and that it is their duty, not only with humble reſignation to ſubmit to this allotment, but to endeavour to embrace it with alacrity and joy. A wiſe man ſhould ſurely be capable of doing what a good ſoldier holds himſelf at all times in readineſs to do.

The

PART VI.

The idea of that divine Being, whoſe benevolence and wiſdom have, from all eternity, contrived and conducted the immenſe machine of the univerſe, ſo as at all times to produce the greateſt poſſible quantity of happineſs, is certainly of all the objects of human contemplation by far the moſt ſublime. Every other thought neceſſarily appears mean in the compariſon. The man whom we believe to be principally occupied in this ſublime contemplation, ſeldom fails to be the object of our higheſt veneration; and though his life ſhould be altogether contemplative, we often regard him with a ſort of religious reſpect much ſuperior to that with which we look upon the moſt active and uſeful ſervant of the commonwealth. The Meditations of Marcus Antoninus, which turn principally upon this ſubject, have contributed more, perhaps, to the general admiration of his character, than all the different tranſactions of his juſt, merciful, and beneficent reign.

The adminiſtration of the great ſyſtem of the univerſe, however, the care of the univerſal happineſs of all rational and ſenſible beings, is the buſineſs of God and not of man. To man is allotted a much humbler department, but one much more ſuitable to the weakneſs of his powers, and to the narrowneſs of his comprehenſion; the care of his own happineſs, of that of his family, his friends, his country: that he is occupied in contemplating the more ſublime, can never be an excuſe for his neglecting the more humble department; and he muſt not expoſe

ose himself to the charge which Avidius Cassius s said to have brought, perhaps unjustly, against Marcus Antoninus; that while he employed himself in philosophical speculations, and contemplated the prosperity of the universe, he neglected that of the Roman empire. The most sublime speculation of the contemplative philosopher can scarce compensate the neglect of the smallest active duty.

SECTION III.

OF SELF-COMMAND.

THE man who acts according to the rules of perfect prudence, of strict justice, and of proper benevolence, may be said to be perfectly virtuous. But the most perfect knowledge of those rules will not alone enable him to act in this manner: his own passions are very apt to mislead him; sometimes to drive him and sometimes to seduce him to violate all the rules which he himself, in all his sober and cool hours, approves of. The most perfect knowledge, if it is not supported by the most perfect self-command, will not always enable him to do his duty.

Some of the best of the ancient moralists seem to have considered those passions as divided into two different classes: first, into those which it requires a considerable exertion of self-command to restrain even for a single moment; and secondly, into those which it is easy to restrain for a single moment, or even for a short period of time; but which, by their continual and almost incessant solicitations, are, in the course of a life, very apt to mislead into great deviations.

Fear and anger, together with some other passions which are mixed or connected with them, constitute the first class. The love of ease, of pleasure, of applause, and of many

ſelfiſh gratifications, conſtitute the ſecond.
ıvagant fear and furious anger, it is often
ılt to reſtrain even for a ſingle moment.
love of eaſe, of pleaſure, of applauſe, and
ſelfiſh gratifications, it is always eaſy to
in for a ſingle moment, or even for a ſhort
d of time; but, by their continual ſolicita-
they often miſlead us into many weak-
which we have afterwards much reaſon
aſhamed of. The former ſet of paſſions
often be ſaid to drive, the latter, to ſeduce
m our duty. The command of the former
by the ancient moraliſts above alluded to,
ninated fortitude, manhood, and ſtrength
nd; that of the latter, temperance, de-
, modeſty, and moderation.

e command of each of thoſe two ſets of
ns, independent of the beauty which it
s from its utility; from its enabling us
all occaſions to act according to the dic-
of prudence, of juſtice, and of proper bene-
ce; has a beauty of its own, and ſeems
ſerve for its own ſake a certain degree of
n and admiration. In the one caſe, the
th and greatneſs of the exertion excites
degree of that eſteem and admiration. In
her, the uniformity, the equality and un-
ting ſteadineſs of that exertion.

e man who, in danger, in torture, upon the
ach of death, preſerves his tranquillity
red, and ſuffers no word, no geſture to
him which does not perfectly accord
he feelings of the moſt indifferent ſpectator,

 neceſ-

PART VI.

neceſſarily commands a very high degree of admiration. If he ſuffers in the cauſe of liberty and juſtice, for the ſake of humanity and the love of his country, the moſt tender compaſſion for his ſufferings, the ſtrongeſt indignation againſt the injuſtice of his perſecutors, the warmeſt ſympathetic gratitude for his beneficent intentions, the higheſt ſenſe of his merit, all join and mix themſelves with the admiration of his magnanimity, and often inflame that ſentiment into the moſt enthuſiaſtic and rapturous veneration. The heroes of ancient and modern hiſtory, who are remembered with the moſt peculiar favour and affection, are many of them, thoſe who, in the cauſe of truth, liberty, and juſtice, have periſhed upon the ſcaffold, and who behaved there with that eaſe and dignity which became them. Had the enemies of Socrates ſuffered him to die quietly in his bed, the glory even of that great philoſopher might poſſibly never have acquired that dazzling ſplendour in which it has been beheld in all ſucceeding ages. In the Engliſh hiſtory, when we look over the illuſtrious heads which have been engraven by Vertue and Howbraken, there is ſcarce any body, I imagine, who does not feel that the axe, the emblem of having been beheaded, which is engraved under ſome of the moſt illuſtrious of them; under thoſe of the Sir Thomas Mores, of the Raleighs, the Ruſſels, the Sydneys, &c. ſheds a real dignity and intereſtingneſs over the characters to which it is affixed, much ſuperior to what they can derive

from

from all the futile ornaments of heraldry, with which they are ſometimes accompanied.

Nor does this magnanimity give luſtre only to the characters of innocent and virtuous men. It draws ſome degree of favourable regard even upon thoſe of the greateſt criminals; and when a robber or highwayman is brought to the ſcaffold, and behaves there with decency and firmneſs, though we perfectly approve of his puniſhment, we often cannot help regretting that a man who poſſeſſed ſuch great and noble powers ſhould have been capable of ſuch mean enormities.

War is the great ſchool both for acquiring and exerciſing this ſpecies of magnanimity. Death, as we ſay, is the king of terrors; and the man who has conquered the fear of death, is not likely to loſe his preſence of mind at the approach of any other natural evil. In war, men become familiar with death, and are thereby neceſſarily cured of that ſuperſtitious horror with which it is viewed by the weak and inexperienced. They conſider it merely as the loſs of life, and as no further the object of averſion than as life may happen to be that of deſire. They learn from experience, too, that many ſeemingly great dangers are not ſo great as they appear; and that, with courage, activity, and preſence of mind, there is often a good probability of extricating themſelves with honour from ſituations where at firſt they could ſee no hope. The dread of death is thus greatly diminiſhed; and the confidence or hope of

PART VI.

eſcaping it, augmented. They learn to expoſe themſelves to danger with leſs reluctance. They are leſs anxious to get out of it, and leſs apt to loſe their preſence of mind while they are in it. It is this habitual contempt of danger and death which ennobles the profeſſion of a ſoldier, and beſtows upon it, in the natural apprehenſions of mankind, a rank and dignity ſuperior to that of any other profeſſion. The ſkilful and ſucceſsful exerciſe of this profeſſion, in the ſervice of their country, ſeems to have conſtituted the moſt diſtinguiſhing feature in the character of the favourite heroes of all ages.

Great warlike exploit, though undertaken contrary to every principle of juſtice, and carried on without any regard to humanity, ſometimes intereſts us, and commands even ſome degree of a certain ſort of eſteem for the very worthleſs characters which conduct it. We are intereſted even in the exploits of the Buccaneers; and read with ſome ſort of eſteem and admiration, the hiſtory of the moſt worthleſs men, who, in purſuit of the moſt criminal purpoſes, endured greater hardſhips, ſurmounted greater difficulties, and encountered greater dangers, than, perhaps, any which the ordinary courſe of hiſtory gives an account of.

The command of anger appears upon many occaſions not leſs generous and noble than that of fear. The proper expreſſion of juſt indignation compoſes many of the moſt ſplendid and admired paſſages both of ancient and modern eloquence. The Philippics of Demoſthenes,

the

the Catalinarians of Cicero, derive their whole beauty from the noble propriety with which this paſſion is expreſſed. But this juſt indignation is nothing but anger reſtrained and properly attempered to what the impartial ſpectator can enter into. The bluſtering and noiſy paſſion which goes beyond this, is always odious and offenſive, and intereſts us, not for the angry man, but for the man with whom he is angry. The nobleneſs of pardoning appears, upon many occaſions, ſuperior even to the moſt perfect propriety of reſenting. When either proper acknowledgments have been made by the offending party; or, even without any ſuch acknowledgments, when the public intereſt requires that the moſt mortal enemies ſhould unite for the diſcharge of ſome important duty, the man who can caſt away all animoſity, and act with confidence and cordiality towards the perſon who had moſt grievouſly offended him, ſeems juſtly to merit our higheſt admiration.

The command of anger, however, does not always appear in ſuch ſplendid colours. Fear is contrary to anger, and is often the motive which reſtrains it; and in ſuch caſes the meanneſs of the motive takes away all the nobleneſs of the reſtraint. Anger prompts to attack, and the indulgence of it ſeems ſometimes to ſhew a ſort of courage and ſuperiority to fear. The indulgence of anger is ſometimes an object of vanity. That of fear never is. Vain and weak men, among their inferiors, or thoſe who dare not reſiſt them, often affect to be oſtentatiouſly

PART VI.

paſſionate, and fancy that they ſhow, what is called, ſpirit in being ſo. A bully tells many ſtories of his own inſolence, which are not true, and imagines that he thereby renders himſelf, if not more amiable and reſpectable, at leaſt more formidable to his audience. Modern manners, which, by favouring the practice of duelling, may be ſaid, in ſome caſes, to encourage private revenge, contribute, perhaps, a good deal to render, in modern times, the reſtraint of anger by fear ſtill more contemptible than it might otherwiſe appear to be. There is always ſomething dignified in the command of fear, whatever may be the motive upon which it is founded. It is not ſo with the command of anger. Unleſs it is founded altogether in the ſenſe of decency, of dignity, and propriety, it never is perfectly agreeable.

To act according to the dictates of prudence, of juſtice, and proper beneficence, ſeems to have no great merit where there is no temptation to do otherwiſe. But to act with cool deliberation in the midſt of the greateſt dangers and difficulties; to obſerve religiouſly the ſacred rules of juſtice in ſpite both of the greateſt intereſts which might tempt, and the greateſt injuries which might provoke us to violate them; never to ſuffer the benevolence of our temper to be damped or diſcouraged by the malignity and ingratitude of the individuals towards whom it may have been exerciſed; is the character of the moſt exalted wiſdom and virtue. Self-command is not only itſelf a great virtue, but from

it

it all the other virtues ſeem to derive their principal luſtre.

The command of fear, the command of anger, are always great and noble powers. When they are directed by juſtice and benevolence, they are not only great virtues, but increaſe the ſplendour of thoſe other virtues. They may, however, ſometimes be directed by very different motives; and in this caſe, though ſtill great and reſpectable, they may be exceſſively dangerous. The moſt intrepid valour may be employed in the cauſe of the greateſt injuſtice. Amidſt great provocations, apparent tranquillity and good humour may ſometimes conceal the moſt determined and cruel reſolution to revenge. The ſtrength of mind requiſite for ſuch diſſimulation, though always and neceſſarily contaminated by the baſeneſs of falſehood, has, however, been often much admired by many people of no contemptible judgment. The diſſimulation of Catharine of Medicis is often celebrated by the profound hiſtorian Davila; that of Lord Digby, afterwards Earl of Briſtol, by the grave and conſcientious Lord Clarendon; that of the firſt Aſhley Earl of Shafteſbury, by the judicious Mr. Locke. Even Cicero ſeems to conſider this deceitful character, not indeed as of the higheſt dignity, but as not unſuitable to a certain flexibility of manners, which, he thinks, may, notwithſtanding, be, upon the whole, both agreeable and reſpectable. He exemplifies it by the characters of Homer's Ulyſſes, of the Athenian Themiſtocles, of the Spartan Lyſander, and

PART VI.

and of the Roman Marcus Craſſus. This character of dark and deep diſſimulation occurs moſt commonly in times of great public diſorder; amidſt the violence of faction and civil war. When law has become in a great meaſure impotent, when the moſt perfect innocence cannot alone inſure ſafety, regard to ſelf-defence obliges the greater part of men to have recourſe to dexterity, to addreſs, and to apparent accommodation to whatever happens to be, at the moment, the prevailing party. This falſe character, too, is frequently accompanied with the cooleſt and moſt determined courage. The proper exerciſe of it ſuppoſes that courage, as death is commonly the certain conſequence of detection. It may be employed indifferently, either to exaſperate or to allay thoſe furious animoſities of adverſe factions which impoſe the neceſſity of aſſuming it; and though it may ſometimes be uſeful, it is at leaſt equally liable to be exceſſively pernicious.

The command of the leſs violent and turbulent paſſions ſeems much leſs liable to be abuſed to any pernicious purpoſe. Temperance, decency, modeſty, and moderation, are always amiable, and can ſeldom be directed to any bad end. It is from the unremitting ſteadineſs of thoſe gentler exertions of ſelf-command, that the amiable virtue of chaſtity, that the reſpectable virtues of induſtry and frugality, derive all that ſober luſtre which attends them. The conduct of all thoſe who are contented to walk in the humble paths of private and peaceable life, derives

derives from the ſame principle the greater part of the beauty and grace which belong to it; a beauty and grace, which, though much leſs dazzling, is not always leſs pleaſing than thoſe which accompany the more ſplendid actions of the hero, the ſtateſman, or the legiſlator. SECT. III.

After what has already been ſaid, in ſeveral different parts of this diſcourſe, concerning the nature of ſelf-command, I judge it unneceſſary to enter into any further detail concerning thoſe virtues. I ſhall only obſerve at preſent, that the point of propriety, the degree of any paſſion which the impartial ſpectator approves of, is differently ſituated in different paſſions. In ſome paſſions the exceſs is leſs diſagreeable than the defect; and in ſuch paſſions the point of propriety ſeems to ſtand high, or nearer to the exceſs than to the defect. In other paſſions, the defect is leſs diſagreeable than the exceſs; and in ſuch paſſions the point of propriety ſeems to ſtand low, or nearer to the defect than to the exceſs. The former are the paſſions which the ſpectator is moſt, the latter, thoſe which he is leaſt diſpoſed to ſympathize with. The former, too, are the paſſions of which the immediate feeling or ſenſation is agreeable to the perſon principally concerned; the latter, thoſe of which it is diſagreeable. It may be laid down as a general rule, that the paſſions which the ſpectator is moſt diſpoſed to ſympathize with, and in which, upon that account, the point of propriety may be ſaid to ſtand high, are thoſe of which the immediate feeling or ſenſa-

tion

PART VI.

tion is more or leſs agreeable to the perſon principally concerned: and that, on the contrary, the paſſions which the ſpectator is leaſt diſpoſed to ſympathize with, and in which, upon that account, the point of propriety may be ſaid to ſtand low, are thoſe of which the immediate feeling or ſenſation is more or leſs diſagreeable, or even painful, to the perſon principally concerned. This general rule, ſo far as I have been able to obſerve, admits not of a ſingle exception. A few examples will at once, both ſufficiently explain it and demonſtrate the truth of it.

The diſpoſition to the affections which tend to unite men in ſociety, to humanity, kindneſs, natural affection, friendſhip, eſteem, may ſometimes be exceſſive. Even the exceſs of this diſpoſition, however, renders a man intereſting to every body. Though we blame it, we ſtill regard it with compaſſion, and even with kindneſs, and never with diſlike. We are more ſorry for it than angry at it. To the perſon himſelf, the indulgence even of ſuch exceſſive affections is, upon many occaſions, not only agreeable, but delicious. Upon ſome occaſions, indeed, eſpecially when directed, as is too often the caſe, towards unworthy objects, it expoſes him to much real and heartfelt diſtreſs. Even upon ſuch occaſions, however, a well-diſpoſed mind regards him with the moſt exquiſite pity, and feels the higheſt indignation againſt thoſe who affect to deſpiſe him for his weakneſs and imprudence. The defect of this diſpoſition, on the contrary, what

what is calle l
a man insensible to the f d
other people, renders o e
sensible to his; and, by exc fr
friendship of all the wo , ci a fr
the best and most co l
enjoyments.

The disposition to the affections which drive men from one another, and which tend, as it were, to break the bands of human society; the disposition to anger, hatred, envy, malice, revenge; is, on the contrary, much more apt to offend by its excess than by its defect. The excess renders a man wretched and miserable in his own mind, and the object of hatred, and sometimes even of horror, to other people. The defect is very seldom complained of. It may, however, be defective. The want of proper indignation is a most essential defect in the manly character, and, upon many occasions, renders a man incapable of protecting either himself or his friends from insult and injustice. Even that principle, in the excess and improper direction of which consists the odious and detestable passion of envy, may be defective. Envy is that passion which views with malignant dislike the superiority of those who are really entitled to all the superiority they possess. The man, however, who, in matters of consequence, tamely suffers other people, who are entitled to no such superiority, to rise above him or get before him, is justly condemned as mean-spirited. This weakness is commonly founded in indolence,

PART VI.

lence, ſometimes in good nature, in an averſion to oppoſition, to buſtle and ſolicitation, and ſometimes, too, in a ſort of ill-judged magnanimity, which fancies that it can always continue to deſpiſe the advantage which it then deſpiſes, and, therefore, ſo eaſily gives up. Such weakneſs, however, is commonly followed by much regret and repentance; and what had ſome appearance of magnanimity in the beginning frequently gives place to a moſt malignant envy in the end, and to a hatred of that ſuperiority, which thoſe who have once attained it, may often become really entitled to, by the very circumſtance of having attained it. In order to live comfortably in the world, it is, upon all occaſions, as neceſſary to defend our dignity and rank, as it is to defend our life or our fortune.

Our ſenſibility to perſonal danger and diſtreſs, like that to perſonal provocation, is much more apt to offend by its exceſs than by its defect. No character is more contemptible than that of a coward; no character is more admired than that of the man who faces death with intrepidity, and maintains his tranquillity and preſence of mind amidſt the moſt dreadful dangers. We eſteem the man who ſupports pain and even torture with manhood and firmneſs; and we can have little regard for him who ſinks under them, and abandons himſelf to uſeleſs outcries and womaniſh lamentations. A fretful temper, which feels, with too much ſenſibility, every little croſs accident, renders a man miſerable in himſelf

himſelf and offenſive to other people. A calm one, which does not allow its tranquillity to be diſturbed, either by the ſmall injuries, or by the little diſaſters incident to the uſual courſe of human affairs; but which, amidſt the natural and moral evils infeſting the world, lays its account and is contented to ſuffer a little from both, is a bleſſing to the man himſelf, and gives eaſe and ſecurity to all his companions.

Our ſenſibility, however, both to our own injuries and to our own misfortunes, though generally too ſtrong, may likewiſe be too weak. The man who feels little for his own misfortunes, muſt always feel leſs for thoſe of other people, and be leſs diſpoſed to relieve them. The man who has little reſentment for the injuries which are done to himſelf, muſt always have leſs for thoſe which are done to other people, and be leſs diſpoſed either to protect or to avenge them. A ſtupid inſenſibility to the events of human life neceſſarily extinguiſhes all that keen and earneſt attention to the propriety of our own conduct, which conſtitutes the real eſſence of virtue. We can feel little anxiety about the propriety of our own actions, when we are indifferent about the events which may reſult from them. The man who feels the full diſtreſs of the calamity which has befallen him, who feels the whole baſeneſs of the injuſtice which has been done to him, but who feels ſtill more ſtrongly what the dignity of his own character requires; who does not abandon himſelf to the guidance of the undiſciplined

paſſions

PART VI. paſſions which his ſituation might naturally inſpire; but who governs his whole behaviour and conduct according to thoſe reſtrained and corrected emotions which the great inmate, the great demi-god within the breaſt preſcribes and approves of; is alone the real man of virtue, the only real and proper object of love, reſpect, and admiration. Inſenſibility and that noble firmneſs, that exalted ſelf-command, which is founded in the ſenſe of dignity and propriety, are ſo far from being altogether the ſame, that in proportion as the former takes place, the merit of the latter is, in many caſes, entirely taken away.

But though the total want of ſenſibility to perſonal injury, to perſonal danger and diſtreſs, would, in ſuch ſituations, take away the whole merit of ſelf-command, that ſenſibility, however, may very eaſily be too exquiſite, and it frequently is ſo. When the ſenſe of propriety, when the authority of the judge within the breaſt, can control this extreme ſenſibility, that authority muſt no doubt appear very noble and very great. But the exertion of it may be too fatiguing; it may have too much to do. The individual, by a great effort, may behave perfectly well. But the conteſt between the two principles, the warfare within the breaſt, may be too violent to be at all conſiſtent with internal tranquillity and happineſs. The wiſe man whom Nature has endowed with this too exquiſite ſenſibility, and whoſe too lively feelings have not been ſufficiently blunted and hardened by early

education and proper exercise, will avoid, as much as duty and propriety will permit, the situations for which he is not perfectly fitted. The man whose feeble and delicate constitution renders him too sensible to pain, to hardship, and to every sort of bodily distress, should not wantonly embrace the profession of a soldier. The man of too much sensibility to injury, should not rashly engage in the contests of faction. Though the sense of propriety should be strong enough to command all those sensibilities, the composure of the mind must always be disturbed in the struggle. In this disorder the judgment cannot always maintain its ordinary acuteness and precision; and though he may always mean to act properly, he may often act rashly and imprudently, and in a manner which he himself will, in the succeeding part of his life, be for ever ashamed of. A certain intrepidity, a certain firmness of nerves and hardiness of constitution, whether natural or acquired, are undoubtedly the best preparatives for all the great exertions of self-command.

Though war and faction are certainly the best schools for forming every man to this hardiness and firmness of temper, though they are the best remedies for curing him of the opposite weaknesses, yet, if the day of trial should happen to come before he has completely learned his lesson, before the remedy has had time to produce its proper effect, the consequences might not be agreeable.

PART VI.

Our ſenſibility to the pleaſures, to the amuſements, and enjoyments of human life, may offend, in the ſame manner, either by its exceſs or by its defect. Of the two, however, the exceſs ſeems leſs diſagreeable than the defect. Both to the ſpectator and to the perſon principally concerned, a ſtrong propenſity to joy is certainly more pleaſing than a dull inſenſibility to the objects of amuſement and diverſion. We are charmed with the gaiety of youth, and even with the playfulneſs of childhood: but we ſoon grow weary of the flat and taſteleſs gravity which too frequently accompanies old age. When this propenſity, indeed, is not reſtrained by the ſenſe of propriety, when it is unſuitable to the time or to the place, to the age or to the ſituation of the perſon, when, to indulge it, he neglects either his intereſt or his duty; it is juſtly blamed as exceſſive, and as hurtful both to the individual and to the ſociety. In the greater part of ſuch caſes, however, what is chiefly to be found fault with is, not ſo much the ſtrength of the propenſity to joy, as the weakneſs of the ſenſe of propriety and duty. A young man who has no reliſh for the diverſions and amuſements that are natural and ſuitable to his age, who talks of nothing but his book or his buſineſs, is diſliked as formal and pedantic; and we give him no credit for his abſtinence even from improper indulgences, to which he ſeems to have ſo little inclination.

The

The principle of ſelf-eſtimation may be too high, and it may likewiſe be too low. It is ſo very agreeable to think highly, and ſo very diſagreeable to think meanly of ourſelves, that, to the perſon himſelf, it cannot well be doubted, but that ſome degree of exceſs muſt be much leſs diſagreeable than any degree of defect. But to the impartial ſpectator, it may perhaps be thought, things muſt appear quite differently, and that to him, the defect muſt always be leſs diſagreeable than the exceſs. And in our companions, no doubt, we much more frequently complain of the latter than of the former. When they aſſume upon us, or ſet themſelves before us, their ſelf-eſtimation mortifies our own. Our own pride and vanity prompt us to accuſe them of pride and vanity, and we ceaſe to be the impartial ſpectators of their conduct. When the ſame companions, however, ſuffer any other man to aſſume over them a ſuperiority which does not belong to him, we not only blame them, but often deſpiſe them as mean-ſpirited. When, on the contrary, among other people, they puſh themſelves a little more forward, and ſcramble to an elevation diſproportioned, as we think, to their merit, though we may not perfectly approve of their conduct, we are often, upon the whole, diverted with it; and, where there is no envy in the caſe, we are almoſt always much leſs diſpleaſed with them, than we ſhould have been, had they ſuffered themſelves to ſink below their proper ſtation.

PART VI.

In eſtimating our own merit, in judging of our own character and conduct, there are two different ſtandards to which we naturally compare them. The one is the idea of exact propriety and perfection, ſo far as we are each of us capable of comprehending that idea. The other is that degree of approximation to this idea which is commonly attained in the world, and which the greater part of our friends and companions, of our rivals and competitors, may have actually arrived at. We very ſeldom (I am diſpoſed to think, we never) attempt to judge of ourſelves without giving more or leſs attention to both theſe different ſtandards. But the attention of different men, and even of the ſame man at different times, is often very unequally divided between them; and is ſometimes principally directed towards the one, and ſometimes towards the other.

So far as our attention is directed towards the firſt ſtandard, the wiſeſt and beſt of us all, can, in his own character and conduct, ſee nothing but weakneſs and imperfection; can diſcover no ground for arrogance and preſumption, but a great deal for humility, regret, and repentance. So far as our attention is directed towards the ſecond, we may be affected either in the one way or in the other, and feel ourſelves, either really above, or really below, the ſtandard to which we compare ourſelves.

The wiſe and virtuous man directs his principal attention to the firſt ſtandard; the idea of

exact propriety and perfection. There exists in the mind of every man, an idea of this kind, gradually formed from his observations upon the character and conduct both of himself and of other people. It is the slow, gradual, and progressive work of the great demigod within the breast, the great judge and arbiter of conduct. This idea is in every man more or less accurately drawn, its colouring is more or less just, its outlines are more or less exactly designed, according to the delicacy and acuteness of that sensibility, with which those observations were made, and according to the care and attention employed in making them. In the wise and virtuous man they have been made with the most acute and delicate sensibility, and the utmost care and attention have been employed in making them. Every day some feature is improved; every day some blemish is corrected. He has studied this idea more than other people, he comprehends it more distinctly, he has formed a much more correct image of it, and is much more deeply enamoured of its exquisite and divine beauty. He endeavours, as well as he can, to assimilate his own character to this archetype of perfection. But he imitates the work of a divine artist, which can never be equalled. He feels the imperfect success of all his best endeavours, and sees, with grief and affliction, in how many different features the mortal copy falls short of the immortal original. He remembers, with concern and humiliation, how often, from want of attention, from want of judgment, from

PART VI. want of temper, he has, both in words and actions, both in conduct and converſation, violated the exact rules of perfect propriety; and has ſo far departed from that model, according to which he wiſhed to faſhion his own character and conduct. When he directs his attention towards the ſecond ſtandard, indeed, that degree of excellence which his friends and acquaintances have commonly arrived at, he may be ſenſible of his own ſuperiority. But, as his principal attention is always directed towards the firſt ſtandard, he is neceſſarily much more humbled by the one compariſon, than he ever can be elevated by the other. He is never ſo elated as to look down with inſolence even upon thoſe who are really below him. He feels ſo well his own imperfection, he knows ſo well the difficulty with which he attained his own diſtant approximation to rectitude, that he cannot regard with contempt the ſtill greater imperfection of other people. Far from inſulting over their inferiority, he views it with the moſt indulgent commiſeration, and, by his advice as well as example, is at all times willing to promote their further advancement. If, in any particular qualification, they happen to be ſuperior to him (for who is ſo perfect as not to have many ſuperiors in many different qualifications?), far from envying their ſuperiority, he, who knows how difficult it is to excel, eſteems and honours their excellence, and never fails to beſtow upon it the full meaſure of applauſe which it deſerves. His whole mind, in ſhort, is deeply impreſſed, his

his whole behaviour and deportment are diſtinctly ſtamped with the character of real modeſty; with that of a very moderate eſtimation of his own merit, and, at the ſame time, of a full ſenſe of the merit of other people. SECT. III.

In all the liberal and ingenious arts, in painting, in poetry, in muſic, in eloquence, in philoſophy, the great artiſt feels always the real imperfection of his own beſt works, and is more ſenſible than any man how much they fall ſhort of that ideal perfection of which he has formed ſome conception, which he imitates as well as he can, but which he deſpairs of ever equalling. It is the inferior artiſt only, who is ever perfectly ſatisfied with his own performances. He has little conception of this ideal perfection, about which he has little employed his thoughts; and it is chiefly to the works of other artiſts, of, perhaps, a ſtill lower order, that he deigns to compare his own works. Boileau, the great French poet (in ſome of his works, perhaps not inferior to the greateſt poet of the ſame kind, either ancient or modern), uſed to ſay, that no great man was ever completely ſatisfied with his own works. His acquaintance Santeuil (a writer of Latin verſes, and who, on account of that ſchool-boy accompliſhment, had the weakneſs to fancy himſelf a poet), aſſured him, that he himſelf was always completely ſatisfied with *his* own. Boileau replied, with, perhaps, an arch ambiguity, That he certainly was the only great man that ever was ſo. Boileau, in judging of his own works, compared them with the ſtandard of ideal perfection, which, in his own particular

PART VI. branch of the poetic art, he had, I presume, meditated as deeply, and conceived as distinctly, as it is possible for man to conceive it. Santeuil, in judging of *his* own works, compared them, I suppose, chiefly to those of the other Latin poets of his own time, to the greater part of whom he was certainly very far from being inferior. But to support and finish off, if I may say so, the conduct and conversation of a whole life to some resemblance of this ideal perfection, is surely much more difficult than to work up to an equal resemblance any of the productions of any of the ingenious arts. The artist sits down to his work undisturbed, at leisure, in the full possession and recollection of all his skill, experience, and knowledge. The wise man must support the propriety of his own conduct in health and in sickness, in success and in disappointment, in the hour of fatigue and drowsy indolence, as well as in that of the most awakened attention. The most sudden and unexpected assaults of difficulty and distress must never surprise him. The injustice of other people must never provoke him to injustice. The violence of faction must never confound him. All the hardships and hazards of war must never either dishearten or appal him.

Of the persons who, in estimating their own merit, in judging of their own character and conduct, direct by far the greater part of their attention to the second standard, to that ordinary degree of excellence which is commonly attained by other people, there are some who really

really and justly feel themselves very much above it, and who, by every intelligent and impartial spectator, are acknowledged to be so. The attention of such persons, however, being always principally directed, not to the standard of ideal, but to that of ordinary perfection, they have little sense of their own weaknesses and imperfections; they have little modesty; and often assuming, arrogant, and presumptuous; great admirers of themselves, and great contemners of other people. Though their characters are in general much less correct, and their merit much inferior to that of the man of real and modest virtue; yet their excessive presumption, founded upon their own excessive self-admiration, dazzles the multitude, and often imposes even upon those who are much superior to the multitude. The frequent, and often wonderful, success of the most ignorant quacks and impostors, both civil and religious, sufficiently demonstrate how easily the multitude are imposed upon by the most extravagant and groundless pretensions. But when those pretensions are supported by a very high degree of real and solid merit, when they are displayed with all the splendour which ostentation can bestow upon them, when they are supported by high rank and great power, when they have often been successfully exerted, and are, upon that account, attended by the loud acclamations of the multitude; even the man of sober judgment often abandons himself to the general admiration. The very noise of those foolish acclama-

SECT. III.

PART VI. acclamations often contributes to confound his underſtanding, and while he ſees thoſe great men only at a certain diſtance, he is often diſpoſed to worſhip them with a ſincere admiration, ſuperior even to that with which they appear to worſhip themſelves. When there is no envy in the caſe, we all take pleaſure in admiring, and are, upon that account, naturally diſpoſed, in our own fancies, to render complete and perfect in every reſpect the characters which, in many reſpects, are ſo very worthy of admiration. The exceſſive ſelf-admiration of thoſe great men is well underſtood, perhaps, and even ſeen through, with ſome degree of deriſion, by thoſe wiſe men who are much in their familiarity, and who ſecretly ſmile at thoſe lofty pretenſions, which, by people at a diſtance, are often regarded with reverence, and almoſt with adoration. Such, however, have been, in all ages, the greater part of thoſe men who have procured to themſelves the moſt noiſy fame, the moſt extenſive reputation; a fame and reputation, too, which have often deſcended to the remoteſt poſterity.

Great ſucceſs in the world, great authority over the ſentiments and opinions of mankind, have very ſeldom been acquired without ſome degree of this exceſſive ſelf-admiration. The moſt ſplendid characters, the men who have performed the moſt illuſtrious actions, who have brought about the greateſt revolutions, both in the ſituations and opinions of mankind; the moſt ſucceſsful warriors, the greateſt ſtateſmen and

and legiſlators, the eloquent founders and leaders of the moſt numerous and moſt ſucceſsful ſects and parties; have many of them been, not more diſtinguiſhed for their very great merit, than for a degree of preſumption and ſelf-admiration altogether diſproportioned even to that very great merit. This preſumption was, perhaps, neceſſary, not only to prompt them to undertakings which a more ſober mind would never have thought of, but to command the ſubmiſſion and obedience of their followers to ſupport them in ſuch undertakings. When crowned with ſucceſs, accordingly, this preſumption has often betrayed them into a vanity that approached almoſt to inſanity and folly. Alexander the Great appears, not only to have wiſhed that other people ſhould think him a God, but to have been at leaſt very well diſpoſed to fancy himſelf ſuch. Upon his death-bed, the moſt ungodlike of all ſituations, he requeſted of his friends that, to the reſpectable liſt of Deities, into which himſelf had long before been inſerted, his old mother Olympia might likewiſe have the honour of being added. Amidſt the reſpectful admiration of his followers and diſciples, amidſt the univerſal applauſe of the public, after the oracle, which probably had followed the voice of that applauſe, had pronounced him the wiſeſt of men, the great wiſdom of Socrates, though it did not ſuffer him to fancy himſelf a God, yet was not great enough to hinder him from fancying that he had ſecret and frequent intimations from ſome inviſible

and

PART VI.

and divine Being. The ſound head of Cæſar was not ſo perfectly ſound as to hinder him from being much pleaſed with his divine genealogy from the goddeſs Venus; and, before the temple of this pretended great-grandmother, to receive, without riſing from his ſeat, the Roman Senate, when that illuſtrious body came to preſent him with ſome decrees conferring upon him the moſt extravagant honours. This inſolence, joined to ſome other acts of an almoſt childiſh vanity, little to be expected from an underſtanding at once ſo very acute and comprehenſive, ſeems, by exaſperating the public jealouſy, to have emboldened his aſſaſſins, and to have haſtened the execution of their conſpiracy. The religion and manners of modern times give our great men little encouragement to fancy themſelves either Gods or even Prophets. Succeſs, however, joined to great popular favour, has often ſo far turned the heads of the greateſt of them, as to make them aſcribe to themſelves both an importance and an ability much beyond what they really poſſeſſed; and, by this preſumption, to precipitate themſelves into many raſh and ſometimes ruinous adventures. It is a characteriſtic almoſt peculiar to the great Duke of Marlborough, that ten years of ſuch uninterrupted and ſuch ſplendid ſucceſs as ſcarce any other general could boaſt of, never betrayed him into a ſingle raſh action, ſcarce into a ſingle raſh word or expreſſion. The ſame temperate coolneſs and ſelf-command cannot, I think, be aſcribed to any other great warrior

of

of later times; not to Prince Eugene, not to the late King of Pruſſia, not to the great Prince of Conde, not even to Guſtavus Adolphus. Turrenne ſeems to have approached the neareſt to it; but ſeveral different tranſactions of his life ſufficiently demonſtrate that it was in him by no means ſo perfect as in the great Duke of Marlborough.

In the humble projects of private life, as well as in the ambitious and proud purſuits of high ſtations, great abilities and ſucceſsful enterpriſe, in the beginning, have frequently encouraged to undertakings which neceſſarily led to bankruptcy and ruin in the end.

The eſteem and admiration which every impartial ſpectator conceives for the real merit of thoſe ſpirited, magnanimous, and high-minded perſons, as it is a juſt and well-founded ſentiment, ſo it is a ſteady and permanent one, and altogether independent of their good or bad fortune. It is otherwiſe with that admiration which he is apt to conceive for their exceſſive ſelf-eſtimation and preſumption. While they are ſucceſsful, indeed, he is often perfectly conquered and overborne by them. Succeſs covers from his eyes, not only the great imprudence, but frequently the great injuſtice of their enterpriſes; and, far from blaming this defective part of their character, he often views it with the moſt enthuſiaſtic admiration. When they are unfortunate, however, things change their colours and their names. What was before heroic magnanimity, reſumes its proper appella-

tion

PART VI.

tion of extravagant raſhneſs and folly; and the blackneſs of that avidity and injuſtice, which was before hid under the ſplendour of proſperity, comes full into view, and blots the whole luſtre of their enterpriſe. Had Cæſar, inſtead of gaining, loſt the battle of Pharſalia, his character would, at this hour, have ranked a little above that of Catiline, and the weakeſt man would have viewed his enterpriſe againſt the laws of his country in blacker colours, than, perhaps even Cato, with all the animoſity of a party-man, ever viewed it at the time. His real merit, the juſtneſs of his taſte, the ſimplicity and elegance of his writings, the propriety of his eloquence, his ſkill in war, his reſources in diſtreſs, his cool and ſedate judgment in danger, his faithful attachment to his friends, his unexampled generoſity to his enemies, would all have been acknowledged; as the real merit of Catiline, who had many great qualities, is acknowledged at this day. But the inſolence and injuſtice of his all-graſping ambition would have darkened and extinguiſhed the glory of all that real merit. Fortune has in this, as well as in ſome other reſpects already mentioned, great influence over the moral ſentiments of mankind, and, according as ſhe is either favourable or adverſe, can render the ſame character the object, either of general love and admiration, or of univerſal hatred and contempt. This great diſorder in our moral ſentiments is by no means, however, without its utility; and we may on this, as well as on many other occaſions, admire the wiſdom of God even in

n the weakneſs and folly of man. Our admira-
ion of ſucceſs is founded upon the ſame prin-
iple with our reſpect for wealth and greatneſs,
nd is equally neceſſary for eſtabliſhing the
liſtinction of ranks and the order of ſociety.
By this admiration of ſucceſs we are taught to
ubmit more eaſily to thoſe ſuperiors, whom
he courſe of human affairs may aſſign to us;
o regard with reverence, and ſometimes even
with a ſort of reſpectful affection, that fortunate
violence which we are no longer capable of
refiſting; not only the violence of ſuch ſplendid
characters as thoſe of a Cæſar or an Alexander,
but often that of the moſt brutal and ſavage
barbarians, of an Attila, a Gengis, or a Tamer-
lane. To all ſuch mighty conquerors the great
nob of mankind are naturally diſpoſed to look
up with a wondering, though, no doubt, with
a very weak and fooliſh admiration. By this
admiration, however, they are taught to acquieſce
with leſs reluctance under that government
which an irreſiſtible force impoſes upon them,
and from which no reluctance could deliver
them.

Though in proſperity, however, the man of
exceſſive ſelf-eſtimation may ſometimes appear
to have ſome advantage over the man of correct
and modeſt virtue; though the applauſe of the
multitude, and of thoſe who ſee them both only
at a diſtance, is often much louder in favour
of the one than it ever is in favour of the other;
yet, all things fairly computed, the real balance
of advantage is, perhaps in all caſes, greatly in

PART VI. favour of the latter and againſt the former. The man who neither aſcribes to himſelf, nor wiſhes that other people ſhould aſcribe to him, any other merit beſides that which really belongs to him, fears no humiliation, dreads no detection; but reſts contented and ſecure upon the genuine truth and ſolidity of his own character. His admirers may neither be very numerous nor very loud in their applauſes; but the wiſeſt man who ſees him the neareſt and who knows him the beſt, admires him the moſt. To a real wiſe man the judicious and well-weighed approbation of a ſingle wiſe man, gives more heartfelt ſatiſfaction than all the noiſy applauſes of ten thouſand ignorant though enthuſiaſtic admirers. He may ſay with Parmenides, who, upon reading a philoſophical diſcourſe before a public aſſembly at Athens, and obſerving, that, except Plato, the whole company had left him, continued, notwithſtanding, to read on, and ſaid that Plato alone was audience ſufficient for him.

It is otherwiſe with the man of exceſſive ſelf-eſtimation. The wiſe men who ſee him the neareſt, admire him the leaſt. Amidſt the intoxication of proſperity, their ſober and juſt eſteem falls ſo far ſhort of the extravagance of his own ſelf-admiration, that he regards it as mere malignity and envy. He ſuſpects his beſt friends. Their company becomes offenſive to him. He drives them from his preſence, and often rewards their ſervices, not only with ingratitude, but with cruelty and injuſtice. He abandons his confidence to flatterers and traitors, who

who pretend to idolize his vanity and presumption; and that character which in the beginning, though in some respects defective, was, upon the whole, both amiable and respectable, becomes contemptible and odious in the end. Amidst the intoxication of prosperity, Alexander killed Clytus, for having preferred the exploits of his father Philip to his own; put Calisthenes to death in torture, for having refused to adore him in the Persian manner; and murdered the great friend of his father, the venerable Parmenio, after having, upon the most groundless suspicions, sent first to the torture and afterwards to the scaffold the only remaining son of that old man, the rest having all before died in his own service. This was that Parmenio of whom Philip used to say, that the Athenians were very fortunate who could find ten generals every year, while he himself, in the whole course of his life, could never find one but Parmenio. It was upon the vigilance and attention of this Parmenio that he reposed at all times with confidence and security, and, in his hours of mirth and jollity, used to say, Let us drink, my friends, we may do it with safety, for Parmenio never drinks. It was this same Parmenio, with whose presence and counsel, it had been said, Alexander had gained all his victories; and without whose presence and counsel, he had never gained a single victory. The humble, admiring, and flattering friends, whom Alexander left in power and authority behind him, divided his empire among themselves,

PART VI.

ſelves, and after having thus robbed his family and kindred of their inheritance, put, one after another, every ſingle ſurviving individual of them, whether male or female, to death.

We frequently, not only pardon, but thoroughly enter into and ſympathize with the exceſſive ſelf-eſtimation of thoſe ſplendid characters in which we obſerve a great and diſtinguiſhed ſuperiority above the common level of mankind. We call them ſpirited, magnanimous, and high-minded; words which all involve in their meaning a conſiderable degree of praiſe and admiration. But we cannot enter into and ſympathize with the exceſſive ſelf-eſtimation of thoſe characters in which we can diſcern no ſuch diſtinguiſhed ſuperiority. We are diſguſted and revolted by it; and it is with ſome difficulty that we can either pardon or ſuffer it. We call it pride or vanity; two words, of which the latter always, and the former for the moſt part, involve in their meaning a conſiderable degree of blame.

Thoſe two vices, however, though reſembling, in ſome reſpects, as being both modifications of exceſſive ſelf-eſtimation, are yet, in many reſpects, very different from one another.

The proud man is ſincere, and, in the bottom of his heart, is convinced of his own ſuperiority; though it may ſometimes be difficult to gueſs upon what that conviction is founded. He wiſhes you to view him in no other light than that in which, when he places himſelf in your ſituation, he really views himſelf. He demands

no

no more of you than, what he thinks, juſtice. If you appear not to reſpect him as he reſpects himſelf, he is more offended than mortified, and feels the ſame indignant reſentment as if he had ſuffered a real injury. He does not even then, however, deign to explain the grounds of his own pretenſions. He diſdains to court your eſteem. He affects even to deſpiſe it, and endeavours to maintain his aſſumed ſtation, not ſo much by making you ſenſible of his ſuperiority, as of your own meanneſs. He ſeems to wiſh not ſo much to excite your eſteem for *himſelf*, as to mortify *that* for *yourſelf*.

The vain man is not ſincere, and, in the bottom of his heart, is very ſeldom convinced of that ſuperiority which he wiſhes you to aſcribe to him. He wiſhes you to view him in much more ſplendid colours than thoſe in which, when he places himſelf in your ſituation, and ſuppoſes you to know all that he knows, he can really view himſelf. When you appear to view him, therefore, in different colours, perhaps in his proper colours, he is much more mortified than offended. The grounds of his claim to that character which he wiſhes you to aſcribe to him, he takes every opportunity of diſplaying, both by the moſt oſtentatious and unneceſſary exhibition of the good qualities and accompliſhments which he poſſeſſes in ſome tolerable degree, and ſometimes even by falſe pretenſions to thoſe which he either poſſeſſes in no degree, or in ſo very ſlender a degree that he may well enough be ſaid to poſſeſs them in no degree. Far from

PART VI.

deſpiſing your eſteem, he courts it with the moſt anxious aſſiduity. Far from wiſhing to mortify your ſelf-eſtimation, he is happy to cheriſh it, in hopes that in return you will cheriſh his own. He flatters in order to be flattered. He ſtudies to pleaſe, and endeavours to bribe you into a good opinion of him by politeneſs and complaiſance, and ſometimes even by real and eſſential good offices, though often diſplayed, perhaps, with unneceſſary oſtentation.

The vain man ſees the reſpect which is paid to rank and fortune, and wiſhes to uſurp this reſpect, as well as that for talents and virtues. His dreſs, his equipage, his way of living, accordingly, all announce both a higher rank and a greater fortune than really belong to him; and in order to ſupport this fooliſh impoſition for a few years in the beginning of his life, he often reduces himſelf to poverty and diſtreſs long before the end of it. As long as he can continue his expence, however, his vanity is delighted with viewing himſelf, not in the light in which you would view him if you knew all that he knows; but in that in which, he imagines, he has, by his own addreſs, induced you actually to view him. Of all the illuſions of vanity this is, perhaps, the moſt common. Obſcure ſtrangers who viſit foreign countries, or who, from a remote province, come to viſit, for a ſhort time, the capital of their own country, moſt frequently attempt to practiſe it. The folly of the attempt, though always very great and moſt unworthy of a man of ſenſe, may not be alto-

altogether ſo great upon ſuch as upon moſt other occaſions. If their ſtay is ſhort, they may eſcape any diſgraceful detection; and, after indulging their vanity for a few months or a few years, they may return to their own homes, and repair, by future parſimony, the waſte of their paſt profuſion.

The proud man can very ſeldom be accuſed of this folly. His ſenſe of his own dignity renders him careful to preſerve his independency, and, when his fortune happens not to be large, though he wiſhes to be decent, he ſtudies to be frugal and attentive in all his expences. The oſtentatious expence of the vain man is highly offenſive to him. It outſhines, perhaps, his own. It provokes his indignation as an inſolent aſſumption of a rank which is by no means due; and he never talks of it without loading it with the harſheſt and ſevereſt reproaches.

The proud man does not always feel himſelf at his eaſe in the company of his equals, and ſtill less in that of his ſuperiors. He cannot lay down his lofty pretenſions, and the countenance and converſation of ſuch company overawe him so much that he dare not diſplay them. He has recourſe to humbler company, for which he has little reſpect, which he would not willingly chuſe, and which is by no means agreeable to him; that of his inferiors, his flatterers, and dependants. He ſeldom viſits his ſuperiors, or, if he does, it is rather to ſhow that he is entitled to live in ſuch company, than for any real ſatiſfaction that he enjoys in it. It is as Lord Clarendon

PART VI.

rendon ſays of the Earl of Arundel, that he ſometimes went to court, becauſe he could there only find a greater man than himſelf; but that he went very ſeldom, becauſe he found there a greater man than himſelf.

It is quite otherwiſe with the vain man. He courts the company of his ſuperiors as much as the proud man ſhuns it. Their ſplendour, he ſeems to think, reflects a ſplendour upon thoſe who are much about them. He haunts the courts of kings and the levees of miniſters, and gives himſelf the air of being a candidate for fortune and preferment, when in reality he poſſeſſes the much more precious happineſs, if he knew how to enjoy it, of not being one. He is fond of being admitted to the tables of the great, and ſtill more fond of magnifying to other people the familiarity with which he is honoured there. He aſſociates himſelf, as much as he can, with faſhionable people, with thoſe who are ſuppoſed to direct the public opinion, with the witty, with the learned, with the popular; and he ſhuns the company of his beſt friends whenever the very uncertain current of public favour happens to run in any reſpect againſt them. With the people to whom he wiſhes to recommend himſelf, he is not always very delicate about the means which he employs for that purpoſe; unneceſſary oſtentation, groundleſs pretenſions, conſtant aſſentation, frequently flattery, though for the moſt part a pleaſant and a ſprightly flattery, and very ſeldom the groſs and fulſome flattery of a paraſite. The proud man, on the contrary,

trary, never flatters, and is frequently ſcarce civil to any body. SECT. III.

Notwithſtanding all its groundleſs pretenſions, however, vanity is almoſt always a ſprightly and a gay, and very often a good-natured paſſion. Pride is always a grave, a ſullen, and a ſevere one. Even the falſehoods of the vain man are all innocent falſehoods, meant to raiſe himſelf, not to lower other people. To do the proud man juſtice he very ſeldom ſtoops to the baſeneſs of falſehood. When he does, however, his falſehoods are by no means ſo innocent. They are all miſchievous, and meant to lower other people. He is full of indignation at the unjuſt ſuperiority, as he thinks it, which is given to them. He views them with malignity and envy, and, in talking of them, often endeavours, as much as he can, to extenuate and leſſen whatever are the grounds upon which their ſuperiority is ſuppoſed to be founded. Whatever tales are circulated to their diſadvantage, though he ſeldom forges them himſelf, yet he often takes pleaſure in believing them, is by no means unwilling to repeat them, and even ſometimes with ſome degree of exaggeration. The worſt falſehoods of vanity are what we call white lies: thoſe of pride, whenever it condeſcends to falſehood, are all of the oppoſite complexion.

Our diſlike to pride and vanity generally diſpoſes us to rank the perſons whom we accuſe of thoſe vices rather below than above the common level. In this judgment however, I think, we are moſt frequently in the wrong, and that both

PART VI.

the proud and the vain man are often (perhaps for the moſt part) a good deal above it; though not near ſo much as either the one really thinks himſelf, or as the other wiſhes you to think him. If we compare them with their own pretenſions, they may appear the juſt objects of contempt. But when we compare them with what the greater part of their rivals and competitors really are, they may appear quite otherwiſe, and very much above the common level. Where there is this real ſuperiority, pride is frequently attended with many reſpectable virtues; with truth, with integrity, with a high ſenſe of honour, with cordial and ſteady friendſhip, with the moſt inflexible firmneſs and reſolution. Vanity, with many amiable ones; with humanity, with politeneſs, with a deſire to oblige in all little matters, and ſometimes with a real generoſity in great ones; a generoſity, however, which it often wiſhes to diſplay in the moſt ſplendid colours that it can. By their rivals and enemies, the French, in the laſt century, were accuſed of vanity; the Spaniards, of pride; and foreign nations were diſpoſed to conſider the one as the more amiable; the other, as the more reſpectable people.

The words *vain* and *vanity* are never taken in a good ſenſe. We ſometimes ſay of a man, when we are talking of him in good humour, that he is the better for his vanity, or that his vanity is more diverting than offenſive; but we ſtill conſider it as a foible and a ridicule in his character.

The words *proud* and *pride*, on the contrary, are ſometimes taken in a good ſenſe. We frequently ſay of a man, that he is too proud, or that

that he has too much noble pride, ever to ſuffer himſelf to do a mean thing. Pride is, in this caſe, confounded with magnanimity. Ariſtotle, a philoſopher who certainly knew the world, in drawing the character of the magnanimous man, paints him with many features which, in the two laſt centuries, were commonly aſcribed to the Spaniſh character: that he was deliberate in all his reſolutions; ſlow, and even tardy, in all his actions; that his voice was grave, his ſpeech deliberate, his ſtep and motion ſlow; that he appeared indolent and even ſlothful, not at all diſpoſed to buſtle about little matters, but to act with the moſt determined and vigorous reſolution upon all great and illuſtrious occaſions: that he was not a lover of danger, or forward to expoſe himſelf to little dangers, but to great dangers; and that, when he expoſed himſelf to danger, he was altogether regardleſs of his life.

The proud man is commonly too well contented with himſelf to think that his character requires any amendment. The man who feels himſelf all-perfect, naturally enough deſpiſes all further improvement. His ſelf-ſufficiency and abſurd conceit of his own ſuperiority, commonly attend him from his youth to his moſt advanced age; and he dies, as Hamlet ſays, with all his ſins upon his head, unanointed, unanealed.

It is frequently quite otherwiſe with the vain man. The deſire of the eſteem and admiration of other people, when for qualities and talents which are the natural and proper objects of eſteem and admiration, is the real love of true glory; a paſſion which, if not the very beſt

paſſion

PART VI. paſſion of human nature, is certainly one of the beſt. Vanity is very frequently no more than an attempt prematurely to uſurp that glory before it is due. Though your ſon, under five-and-twenty years of age, ſhould be but a coxcomb; do not, upon that account, deſpair of his becoming, before he is forty, a very wiſe and worthy man, and a real proficient in all thoſe talents and virtues to which, at preſent, he may only be an oſtentatious and empty pretender. The great ſecret of education is to direct vanity to proper objects. Never ſuffer him to value himſelf upon trivial accompliſhments. But do not always diſcourage his pretenſions to thoſe that are of real importance. He would not pretend to them if he did not earneſtly deſire to poſſeſs them. Encourage this deſire; afford him every means to facilitate the acquiſition; and do not take too much offence, although he ſhould ſometimes aſſume the air of having attained it a little before the time.

Such, I ſay, are the diſtinguiſhing characteriſtics of pride and vanity, when each of them acts according to its proper character. But the proud man is often vain; and the vain man is often proud. Nothing can be more natural than that the man, who thinks much more highly of himſelf than he deſerves, ſhould wiſh that other people ſhould think ſtill more highly of him: or that the man, who wiſhes that other people ſhould think more highly of him than he thinks of himſelf, ſhould, at the ſame time, think much more highly of himſelf than he deſerves. Thoſe two vices being frequently blended in the ſame character,

character, the characteriſtics of both are neceſſarily confounded; and we ſometimes find the ſuperficial and impertinent oſtentation of vanity joined to the moſt malignant and deriſive inſolence of pride. We are ſometimes, upon that account, at a loſs how to rank a particular character, or whether to place it among the proud or among the vain.

Men of merit conſiderably above the common level, ſometimes under-rate as well as over-rate themſelves. Such characters, though not very dignified, are often, in private ſociety, far from being diſagreeable. His companions all feel themſelves much at their eaſe in the ſociety of a man ſo perfectly modeſt and unaſſuming. If thoſe companions, however, have not both more diſcernment and more generoſity than ordinary, though they may have ſome kindneſs for him, they have ſeldom much reſpect; and the warmth of their kindneſs is very ſeldom ſufficient to compenſate the coldneſs of their reſpect. Men of no more than ordinary diſcernment never rate any perſon higher than he appears to rate himſelf. He ſeems doubtful himſelf, they ſay, whether he is perfectly fit for ſuch a ſituation or ſuch an office; and immediately give the preference to ſome impudent blockhead who entertains no doubt about his own qualifications. Though they ſhould have diſcernment, yet, if they want generoſity, they never fail to take advantage of his ſimplicity, and to aſſume over him an impertinent ſuperiority which they are by no means entitled to. His good nature may

 enable

PART VI.

enable him to bear this for ſome time; but he grows weary at laſt, and frequently when it is too late, and when that rank, which he ought to have aſſumed, is loſt irrecoverably, and uſurped, in conſequence of his own backwardneſs, by ſome of his more forward, though much leſs meritorious companions. A man of this character muſt have been very fortunate in the early choice of his companions, if, in going through the world, he meets always with fair juſtice, even from thoſe whom, from his own paſt kindneſs, he might have ſome reaſon to conſider as his beſt friends; and a youth, too unaſſuming and too unambitious, is frequently followed by an inſignificant, complaining, and diſcontented old age.

Thoſe unfortunate perſons whom nature has formed a good deal below the common level, ſeem ſometimes to rate themſelves ſtill more below it than they really are. This humility appears ſometimes to ſink them into idiotiſm. Whoever has taken the trouble to examine idiots with attention, will find that, in many of them, the faculties of the underſtanding are by no means weaker than in ſeveral other people, who, though acknowledged to be dull and ſtupid, are not, by any body, accounted idiots. Many idiots, with no more than ordinary education, have been taught to read, write, and account tolerably well. Many perſons, never accounted idiots, notwithſtanding the moſt careful education, and notwithſtanding that, in their advanced age, they have had ſpirit enough to at-

tempt to learn what their early education had not taught them, have never been able to acquire, in any tolerable degree, any one of those three accomplishments. By an instinct of pride, however, they set themselves upon a level with their equals in age and situation; and, with courage and firmness, maintain their proper station among their companions. By an opposite instinct, the idiot feels himself below every company into which you can introduce him. Ill-usage, to which he is extremely liable, is capable of throwing him into the most violent fits of rage and fury. But no good usage, no kindness or indulgence, can ever raise him to converse with you as your equal. If you can bring him to converse with you at all, however, you will frequently find his answers sufficiently pertinent, and even sensible. But they are always stamped with a distinct consciousness of his own great inferiority. He seems to shrink and, as it were, to retire from your look and conversation; and to feel, when he places himself in your situation, that, notwithstanding your apparent condescension, you cannot help considering him as immensely below you. Some idiots, perhaps the greater part, seem to be so, chiefly or altogether, from a certain numbness or torpidity in the faculties of the understanding. But there are others, in whom those faculties do not appear more torpid or benumbed than in many other people who are not accounted idiots. But that instinct of pride, necessary to support them upon

an

PART VI.

an equality with their brethren, ſeems totally wanting in the former and not in the latter.

That degree of ſelf-eſtimation therefore, which contributes moſt to the happineſs and contentment of the perſon himſelf, ſeems likewiſe moſt agreeable to the impartial ſpectator.

The man who eſteems himſelf as he ought, and no more than he ought, ſeldom fails to obtain from other people all the eſteem that he himſelf thinks due. He deſires no more than is due to him, and he reſts upon it with complete ſatisfaction.

The proud and the vain man, on the contrary, are conſtantly diſſatisfied. The one is tormented with indignation at the unjuſt ſuperiority, as he thinks it, of other people. The other is in continual dread of the ſhame, which, he foreſees, would attend upon the detection of his groundleſs pretenſions. Even the extravagant pretenſions of the man of real magnanimity, though, when ſupported by ſplendid abilities and virtues, and, above all, by good fortune, they impoſe upon the multitude, whoſe applauſes he little regards, do not impoſe upon thoſe wiſe men whoſe approbation he can only value, and whoſe eſteem he is moſt anxious to acquire. He feels that they ſee through, and ſuſpects that they deſpiſe his exceſſive preſumption; and he often ſuffers the cruel misfortune of becoming, firſt the jealous and ſecret, and at laſt the open, furious, and vindictive enemy of thoſe very perſons, whoſe friendſhip it would have given him

the

the greateſt happineſs to enjoy with unſuſpicious ſecurity.

Though our diſlike to the proud and the vain often diſpoſes us to rank them rather below than above their proper ſtation, yet, unleſs we are provoked by ſome particular and perſonal impertinence, we very ſeldom venture to uſe them ill. In common caſes, we endeavour, for our own eaſe, rather to acquieſce, and, as well as we can, to accommodate ourſelves to their folly. But, to the man who under-rates himſelf, unleſs we have both more diſcernment and more generoſity than belong to the greater part of men, we ſeldom fail to do, at leaſt, all the injuſtice which he does to himſelf, and frequently a great deal more. He is not only more unhappy in his own feelings than either the proud or the vain, but he is much more liable to every ſort of ill-uſage from other people. In almoſt all caſes, it is better to be a little too proud, than, in any reſpect, too humble; and, in the ſentiment of ſelf-eſtimation, ſome degree of exceſs ſeems, both to the perſon himſelf and to the impartial ſpectator, to be leſs diſagreeable than any degree of defect.

In this, therefore, as well as in every other emotion, paſſion, and habit, the degree that is moſt agreeable to the impartial ſpectator is likewiſe moſt agreeable to the perſon himſelf; and according as either the exceſs or the defect is leaſt offenſive to the former, ſo, either the one or the other is in proportion leaſt diſagreeable to the latter.

CON-

PART VI.

CONCLUSION OF THE SIXTH PART.

CONCERN for our own happineſs recommends to us the virtue of prudence: concern for that of other people, the virtues of juſtice and beneficence; of which, the one reſtrains us from hurting, the other prompts us to promote that happineſs. Independent of any regard either to what are, or to what ought to be, or to what upon a certain condition would be, the ſentiments of other people, the firſt of thoſe three virtues is originally recommended to us by our ſelfiſh, the other two by our benevolent affections. Regard to the ſentiments of other people, however, comes afterwards both to enforce and to direct the practice of all thoſe virtues; and no man during, either the whole courſe of his life, or that of any conſiderable part of it, ever trod ſteadily and uniformly in the paths of prudence, of juſtice, or of proper beneficence, whoſe conduct was not principally directed by a regard to the ſentiments of the ſuppoſed impartial ſpectator, of the great inmate of the breaſt, the great judge and arbiter of conduct. If in the courſe of the day we have ſwerved in any reſpect from the rules which he preſcribes to us; if we have either exceeded or relaxed in our frugality; if we have either exceeded or relaxed in our induſtry; if through paſſion or inadvertency, we have hurt in any reſpect

respect the interest or happiness of our neighbour; if we have neglected a plain and proper opportunity of promoting that interest and happiness; it is this inmate who, in the evening, calls us to an account for all those omissions and violations, and his reproaches often make us blush inwardly both for our folly and inattention to our own happiness, and for our still greater indifference and inattention, perhaps, to that of other people.

But though the virtues of prudence, justice, and beneficence, may, upon different occasions, be recommended to us almost equally by two different principles; those of self-command are, upon most occasions, principally and almost entirely recommended to us by one; by the sense of propriety, by regard to the sentiments of the supposed impartial spectator. Without the restraint which this principle imposes, every passion would, upon most occasions, rush headlong, if I may say so, to its own gratification. Anger would follow the suggestions of its own fury; fear those of its own violent agitations. Regard to no time or place would induce vanity to refrain from the loudest and most impertinent ostentation; or voluptuousness from the most open, indecent, and scandalous indulgence. Respect for what are, or for what ought to be, or for what upon a certain condition would be, the sentiments of other people, is the sole principle which, upon most occasions, over-awes all those mutinous and turbulent passions into that tone and temper which the impartial spectator can enter into and sympathize with.

 Upon

PART VI.

Upon ſome occaſions, indeed, thoſe paſſions are reſtrained, not ſo much by a ſenſe of their impropriety, as by prudential conſiderations of the bad conſequences which might follow from their indulgence. In ſuch caſes, the paſſions, though reſtrained, are not always ſubdued, but often remain lurking in the breaſt with all their original fury. The man whoſe anger is reſtrained by fear, does not always lay aſide his anger, but only reſerves its gratification for a more ſafe opportunity. But the man who, in relating to ſome other perſon the injury which has been done to him, feels at once the fury of his paſſion cooled and becalmed by ſympathy with the more moderate ſentiments of his companion, who at once adopts thoſe more moderate ſentiments, and comes to view that injury, not in the black and atrocious colours in which he had originally beheld it, but in the much milder and fairer light in which his companion naturally views it; not only reſtrains, but in ſome meaſure ſubdues, his anger. The paſſion becomes really leſs than it was before, and leſs capable of exciting him to the violent and bloody revenge which at firſt, perhaps, he might have thought of inflicting.

Thoſe paſſions which are reſtrained by the ſenſe of propriety, are all in ſome degree moderated and ſubdued by it. But thoſe which are reſtrained only by prudential conſiderations of any kind, are, on the contrary, frequently inflamed by the reſtraint, and ſometimes (long after the provocation given, and when nobody is thinking about it) burſt out abſurdly and

unexpectedly, and with tenfold fury and violence.

Anger, however, as well as every other paſſion, may, upon many occaſions, be very properly reſtrained by prudential conſiderations. Some exertion of manhood and ſelf-command is even neceſſary for this ſort of reſtraint; and the impartial ſpectator may ſometimes view it with that ſort of cold eſteem due to that ſpecies of conduct which he conſiders as a mere matter of vulgar prudence; but never with that affectionate admiration with which he ſurveys the ſame paſſions, when, by the ſenſe of propriety, they are moderated and ſubdued to what he himſelf can readily enter into. In the former ſpecies of reſtraint, he may frequently diſcern ſome degree of propriety, and, if you will, even of virtue; but it is a propriety and virtue of a much inferior order to thoſe which he always feels with tranſport and admiration in the latter.

The virtues of prudence, juſtice, and beneficence, have no tendency to produce any but the moſt agreeable effects. Regard to thoſe effects, as it originally recommends them to the actor, ſo does it afterwards to the impartial ſpectator. In our approbation of the character of the prudent man, we feel, with peculiar complacency, the ſecurity which he muſt enjoy while he walks under the ſafeguard of that ſedate and deliberate virtue. In our approbation of the character of the juſt man, we feel, with equal complacency, the ſecurity which all thoſe connected with him, whether in neighbourhood,

PART VI. ſociety, or buſineſs muſt derive from his ſcrupulous anxiety never either to hurt or offend. In our approbation of the character of the beneficent man, we enter into the gratitude of all thoſe who are within the ſphere of his good offices, and conceive with them the higheſt ſenſe of his merit. In our approbation of all thoſe virtues, our ſenſe of their agreeable effects, of their utility, either to the perſon who exerciſes them, or to ſome other perſons, joins with our ſenſe of their propriety, and conſtitutes always a conſiderable, frequently the greater part of that approbation.

But in our approbation of the virtues of ſelf-command, complacency with their effects ſometimes conſtitutes no part, and frequently but a ſmall part, of that approbation. Thoſe effects may ſometimes be agreeable, and ſometimes diſagreeable; and though our approbation is no doubt ſtronger in the former caſe, it is by no means altogether deſtroyed in the latter. The moſt heroic valour may be employed indifferently in the cauſe either of juſtice or of injuſtice; and though it is no doubt much more loved and admired in the former caſe, it ſtill appears a great and reſpectable quality even in the latter. In that, and in all the other virtues of ſelf-command, the ſplendid and dazzling quality ſeems always to be the greatneſs and ſteadineſs of the exertion, and the ſtrong ſenſe of propriety which is neceſſary in order to make and to maintain that exertion. The effects are too often but too little regarded.

SEC-

THE

THEORY

OF

MORAL SENTIMENTS.

PART VII.

Of Systems of Moral Philosophy.

Consisting of Four Sections.

SECTION I.

OF THE QUESTIONS WHICH OUGHT TO BE EXAMINED IN A THEORY OF MORAL SENTIMENTS.

SECT. I.

IF we examine the most celebrated and remarkable of the different theories which have been given concerning the nature and origin of our moral sentiments, we shall find that almost all of them coincide with some part or other of that which I have been endeavouring to give an account of; and that if every thing which has already been said be fully considered, we shall be at no loss to explain what was the view or aspect of nature which led each particular author to form his particular system. From some one or other of those principles which I have been

PART VII. endeavouring to unfold, every ſyſtem of morality that ever had any reputation in the world has, perhaps, ultimately been derived. As they are all of them, in this reſpect, founded upon natural principles, they are all of them in ſome meaſure in the right. But as many of them are derived from a partial and inperfect view of nature, there are many of them too in ſome reſpects in the wrong.

In treating of the principles of morals there are two queſtions to be conſidered. Firſt, wherein does virtue conſiſt? Or what is the tone of temper, and tenour of conduct, which conſtitutes the excellent and praiſe-worthy character, the character which is the natural object of eſteem, honour, and approbation? And, ſecondly, by what power or faculty in the mind is it, that this character, whatever it be, is recommended to us? Or in other words, how and by what means does it come to paſs, that the mind prefers one tenour of conduct to another, denominates the one right and the other wrong; conſiders the one as the object of approbation, honour, and reward, and the other of blame, cenſure, and puniſhment?

We examine the firſt queſtion when we conſider whether virtue conſiſts in benevolence, as Dr. Hutcheſon imagines; or in acting ſuitably to the different relations we ſtand in, as Dr. Clarke ſuppoſes; or in the wiſe and prudent purſuit of our own real and ſolid happineſs, as has been the opinion of others.

We

SECT. I.

We examine the ſecond queſtion, when we conſider, whether the virtuous character, whatever it conſiſts in, be recommended to us by ſelf-love, which makes us perceive that this character, both in ourſelves and others, tends moſt to promote our own private intereſt; or by reaſon, which points out to us the difference between one character and another, in the ſame manner as it does that between truth and falſehood; or by a peculiar power of perception, called a moral ſenſe, which this virtuous character gratifies and pleaſes, as the contrary diſguſts and diſpleaſes it; or laſt of all, by ſome other principle in human nature, ſuch as a modification of ſympathy, or the like.

I ſhall begin with conſidering the ſyſtems which have been formed concerning the firſt of theſe queſtions, and ſhall proceed afterwards to examine thoſe concerning the ſecond.

SECTION II.

OF THE DIFFERENT ACCOUNTS WHICH HAVE BEEN GIVEN OF THE NATURE OF VIRTUE.

INTRODUCTION.

THE different accounts which have been given of the nature of virtue, or of the temper of mind which conſtitutes the excellent and praiſe-worthy character, may be reduced to three different claſſes. According to ſome, the virtuous temper of mind does not conſiſt in any one ſpecies of affections, but in the proper government and direction of all our affections, which may be either virtuous or vicious according to the objects which they purſue, and the degree of vehemence with which they purſue them. According to theſe authors, therefore, virtue conſiſts in propriety.

According to others, virtue conſiſts in the judicious purſuit of our own private intereſt and happineſs, or in the proper government and direction of thoſe ſelfiſh affections which aim ſolely at this end. In the opinion of theſe authors, therefore, virtue conſiſts in prudence.

Another ſet of authors make virtue conſiſt in thoſe affections only which aim at the happineſs of others, not in thoſe which aim at our own. According to them, therefore, diſintereſted benevolence is the only motive which can ſtamp upon any action the character of virtu .

The

The character of virtue, it is evident, muſt either be aſcribed indifferently to all our affections, when under proper government and direction; or it muſt be confined to ſome one claſs or diviſion of them. The great diviſion of our affections is into the ſelfiſh and the benevolent. If the character of virtue, therefore, cannot be aſcribed indifferently to all our affections, when under proper government and direction, it muſt be confined either to thoſe which aim directly at our own private happineſs, or to thoſe which aim directly at that of others. If virtue, therefore, does not conſiſt in propriety, it muſt conſiſt either in prudence or in benevolence. Beſides theſe three, it is ſcarce poſſible to imagine that any other account can be given of the nature of virtue. I ſhall endeavour to ſhow hereafter how all the other accounts, which are ſeemingly different from any of theſe, coincide at bottom with ſome one or other of them.

CHAP. I.

Of thoſe Syſtems which make Virtue conſiſt in Propriety.

ACCORDING to Plato, to Ariſtotle, and to Zeno, virtue conſiſts in the propriety of conduct, or in the ſuitableneſs of the affection

PART VII. from which we act to the object which excites it.

I. In the ſyſtem of Plato* the ſoul is conſidered as ſomething like a little ſtate or republic, compoſed of three different faculties or orders.

The firſt is the judging faculty, the faculty which determines not only what are the proper means for attaining any end, but alſo what ends are fit to be purſued, and what degree of relative value we ought to put upon each. This faculty Plato called, as it is very properly called, reaſon, and conſidered it as what had a right to be the governing principle of the whole. Under this appellation, it is evident, he comprehended not only that faculty by which we judge of truth and falſehood, but that by which we judge of the propriety or impropriety of deſires and affections.

The different paſſions and appetites, the natural ſubjects of this ruling principle, but which are ſo apt to rebel againſt their maſter, he reduced to two different claſſes or orders. The firſt conſiſted of thoſe paſſions, which are founded in pride and reſentment, or in what the ſchoolmen called the iraſcible part of the ſoul; ambition, animoſity, the love of honour, and the dread of ſhame, the deſire of victory, ſuperiority, and revenge; all thoſe paſſions, in ſhort, which are ſuppoſed either to riſe from, or to denote what, by a metaphor in our language, we commonly call ſpirit or natural fire. The

* See Plato de Rep. lib. iv.

ſecond

ſecond conſiſted of thoſe paſſions which are founded in the love of pleaſure, or in what the ſchoolmen called the concupiſcible part of the ſoul. It comprehended all the appetites of the body, the love of eaſe and ſecurity, and of all ſenſual gratifications.

It rarely happens that we break in upon that plan of conduct, which the governing principle preſcribes, and which in all our cool hours we had laid down to ourſelves as what was moſt proper for us to purſue, but when prompted by one or other of thoſe two different ſets of paſſions; either by ungovernable ambition and reſentment, or by the importunate ſolicitations of preſent eaſe and pleaſure. But though theſe two orders of paſſions are ſo apt to miſlead us, they are ſtill conſidered as neceſſary parts of human nature: the firſt having been given to defend us againſt injuries, to aſſert our rank and dignity in the world, to make us aim at what is noble and honourable, and to make us diſtinguiſh thoſe who act in the ſame manner; the ſecond, to provide for the ſupport and neceſſities of the body.

In the ſtrength, acuteneſs, and perfection of the governing principle was placed the eſſential virtue of prudence, which, according to Plato, conſiſted in a juſt and clear diſcernment, founded upon general and ſcientific ideas, of the ends which were proper to be purſued, and of the means which were proper for attaining them.

When the firſt ſet of paſſions, thoſe of the iraſcible part of the ſoul, had that degree of

ſtrength

ſtrength and firmneſs, which enabled them, under the direction of reaſon, to deſpiſe all dangers in the purſuit of what was honourable and noble; it conſtituted the virtue of fortitude and magnanimity. This order of paſſions, according to this ſyſtem, was of a more generous and noble nature than the other. They were conſidered upon many occaſions as the auxiliaries of reaſon, to check and reſtrain the inferior and brutal appetites. We are often angry at ourſelves, it was obſerved, we often become the objects of our own reſentment and indignation, when the love of pleaſure prompts to do what we diſapprove of; and the iraſcible part of our nature is in this manner called in to aſſiſt the rational againſt the concupiſcible.

When all thoſe three different parts of our nature were in perfect concord with one another, when neither the iraſcible nor concupiſcible paſſions ever aimed at any gratification which reaſon did not approve of, and when reaſon never commanded any thing, but what theſe of their own accord were willing to perform: this happy compoſure, this perfect and complete harmony of ſoul, conſtituted that virtue which in their language is expreſſed by a word which we commonly tranſlate temperance, but which might more properly be tranſlated good temper, or ſobriety and moderation of mind.

Juſtice, the laſt and greateſt of the four cardinal virtues, took place, according to this ſyſtem, when each of thoſe three faculties of the

the mind confined itſelf to its proper office, without attempting to encroach upon that of any other; when reaſon directed and paſſion obeyed, and when each paſſion performed its proper duty, and exerted itſelf towards its proper object eaſily and without reluctance, and with that degree of force and energy, which was ſuitable to the value of what it purſued. In this conſiſted that complete virtue, that perfect propriety of conduct, which Plato, after ſome of the ancient Pythagoreans, denominated Juſtice.

The word, it is to be obſerved, which expreſſes juſtice in the Greek language, has ſeveral different meanings; and as the correſpondent word in all other languages, ſo far as I know, has the ſame, there muſt be ſome natural affinity among thoſe various ſignifications. In one ſenſe we are ſaid to do juſtice to our neighbour when we abſtain from doing him any poſitive harm, and do not directly hurt him, either in his perſon, or in his eſtate, or in his reputation. This is that juſtice which I have treated of above, the obſervance of which may be extorted by force, and the violation of which expoſes to puniſhment. In another ſenſe we are ſaid not to do juſtice to our neighbour unleſs we conceive for him all that love, reſpect, and eſteem, which his character, his ſituation, and his connexion with ourſelves, render ſuitable and proper for us to feel, and unleſs we act accordingly. It is in this ſenſe that we are ſaid to do injuſtice to a man of merit who is connected with us, though we abſtain

PART VII. abſtain from hurting him in every reſpect, if we do not exert ourſelves to ſerve him and to place him in that ſituation in which the impartial ſpectator would be pleaſed to ſee him. The firſt ſenſe of the word coincides with what Ariſtotle and the Schoolmen call commutative juſtice, and with what Grotius calls the *juſtitia expletrix*, which conſiſts in abſtaining from what is another's, and in doing voluntarily whatever we can with propriety be forced to do. The ſecond ſenſe of the word coincides with what ſome have called diſtributive juſtice *, and with the *juſtitia attributrix* of Grotius, which conſiſts in proper beneficence, in the becoming uſe of what is our own, and in the applying it to thoſe purpoſes, either of charity or generoſity, to which it is moſt ſuitable, in our ſituation, that it ſhould be applied. In this ſenſe juſtice comprehends all the ſocial virtues. There is yet another ſenſe in which the word juſtice is ſometimes taken, ſtill more extenſive than either of the former, though very much a-kin to the laſt; and which runs too, ſo far as I know, through all languages. It is in this laſt ſenſe that we are ſaid to be unjuſt, when we do not ſeem to value any particular object with that degree of eſteem, or to purſue it with that degree of ardour which to the impartial ſpectator it may appear to deſerve or to be naturally fitted for exciting. Thus we are ſaid to do injuſtice to a

* The diſtributive juſtice of Ariſtotle is ſomewhat different. It conſiſts in the proper diſtribution of rewards from the public ſtock of a community. See Ariſtotle Ethic. Nic. l. 5. c. 2.

poem

poem or a picture, when we do not admire them enough, and we are ſaid to do them more than juſtice when we admire them too much. In the ſame manner we are ſaid to do injuſtice to ourſelves when we appear not to give ſufficient attention to any particular object of ſelf-intereſt. In this laſt ſenſe, what is called juſtice means the ſame thing with exact and perfect propriety of conduct and behaviour, and comprehends in it, not only the offices of both commutative and diſtributive juſtice, but of every other virtue, of prudence, of fortitude, of temperance. It is in this laſt ſenſe that Plato evidently underſtands what he calls juſtice, and which, therefore, according to him, comprehends in it the perfection of every ſort of virtue.

SECT II.

Such is the account given by Plato of the nature of virtue, or of that temper of mind which is the proper object of praiſe and approbation. It conſiſts, according to him, in that ſtate of mind in which every faculty confines itſelf within its proper ſphere without encroaching upon that of any other, and performs its proper office with that preciſe degree of ſtrength and vigour which belongs to it. His account, it is evident, coincides in every reſpect with what we have ſaid above concerning the propriety of conduct.

II. Virtue, according to Ariſtotle *, conſiſts in the habit of mediocrity according to right reaſon. Every particular virtue, according to

* See Ariſtotle Ethic. Nic. L. 2. c. 5. et ſeq. et L. 3. c. 5. et ſeq.

him,

PART VII.

him, lies in a kind of middle between two oppoſite vices, of which the one offends from being too much, the other from being too little affected by a particular ſpecies of objects. Thus the virtue of fortitude or courage lies in the middle between the oppoſite vices of cowardice and of preſumptuous raſhneſs, of which the one offends from being too much, and the other from being too little affected by the objects of fear. Thus too the virtue of frugality lies in a middle between avarice and profuſion, of which the one conſiſts in an exceſs, the other in a defect of the proper attention to the objects of ſelf-intereſt. Magnanimity, in the ſame manner, lies in a middle between the exceſs of arrogance and the defect of puſillanimity, of which the one conſiſts in too extravagant, the other in too weak a ſentiment of our own worth and dignity. It is unneceſſary to obſerve that this account of virtue correſponds too pretty exactly with what has been ſaid above concerning the propriety and impropriety of conduct.

According to Ariſtotle *, indeed, virtue did not ſo much conſiſt in thoſe moderate and right affections, as in the habit of this moderation. In order to underſtand this, it is to be obſerved, that virtue may be conſidered either as the quality of an action, or as the quality of a perſon. Conſidered as the quality of an action, it conſiſts, even according to Ariſtotle, in the reaſonable moderation of the affection from

* See Ariſtotle Ethic. Nic. lib. ii. ch. 1, 2, 3, and 4.

which

which the action proceeds, whether this disposition be habitual to the person or not. Considered as the quality of a person, it consists in the habit of this reasonable moderation, in its having become the customary and usual disposition of the mind. Thus the action which proceeds from an occasional fit of generosity is undoubtedly a generous action, but the man who performs it, is not necessarily a generous person, because it may be the single action of the kind which he ever performed. The motive and disposition of heart, from which this action was performed, may have been quite just and proper: but as this happy mood seems to have been the effect rather of accidental humour than of any thing steady or permanent in the character, it can reflect no great honour on the performer. When we denominate a character generous or charitable, or virtuous in any respect, we mean to signify that the disposition expressed by each of those appellations is the usual and customary disposition of the person. But single actions of any kind, how proper and suitable soever, are of little consequence to show that this is the case. If a single action was sufficient to stamp the character of any virtue upon the person who performed it, the most worthless of mankind might lay claim to all the virtues; since there is no man who has not, upon some occasions, acted with prudence, justice, temperance and fortitude. But though single actions, how laudable soever, reflect very little praise upon the person who performs them, a single

 vicious

T vicious action performed by one whose conduct is usually very regular, greatly diminishes and sometimes destroys altogether our opinion of his virtue. A single action of this kind sufficiently shows that his habits are not perfect, and that he is less to be depended upon, than, from the usual train of his behaviour, we might have been apt to imagine.

Aristotle too *, when he made virtue to consist in practical habits, had it probably in his view to oppose the doctrine of Plato, who seems to have been of opinion that just sentiments and reasonable judgments concerning what was fit to be done or to be avoided, were alone sufficient to constitute the most perfect virtue. Virtue, according to Plato, might be considered as a species of science, and no man, he thought, could see clearly and demonstratively what was right and what was wrong, and not act accordingly. Passion might make us act contrary to doubtful and uncertain opinions, not to plain and evident judgments. Aristotle, on the contrary, was of opinion, that no conviction of the understanding was capable of getting the better of inveterate habits, and that good morals arose not from knowledge but from action.

III. According to Zeno †, the founder of the Stoical doctrine, every animal was by nature recommended to its own care, and was endowed with the principle of self-love, that it might

* See Aristotle Mag. Mor. lib. i. ch. 1.

† See Cicero de finibus, lib. iii.; also Diogenes L[illegible] in Zenone, lib. vii. segment 84.

endea-

endeavour to preſerve, not only its exiſtence, but all the different parts of its nature, in the beſt and moſt perfect ſtate of which they were capable. SECT. II.

The ſelf-love of man embraced, if I may ſay ſo, his body and all its different members, his mind and all its different faculties and powers, and defired the preſervation and maintenance of them all in their beſt and moſt perfect condition. Whatever tended to ſupport this ſtate of exiſtence was, therefore, by nature pointed out to him as fit to be choſen; and whatever tended to deſtroy it, as fit to be rejected. Thus health, ſtrength, agility, and eaſe of body as well as the external conveniences which could promote theſe; wealth, power, honours, the reſpect and eſteem of thoſe we live with; were naturally pointed out to us as things eligible, and of which the poſſeſſion was preferable to the want. On the other hand, ſickneſs, infirmity, unwieldineſs, pain of body, as well as all the external inconveniences which tend to occaſion or bring on any of them; poverty, the want of authority, the contempt or hatred of thoſe we live with; were, in the ſame manner, pointed out to us as things to be ſhunned and avoided. In each of thoſe two oppoſite claſſes of objects, there were ſome which appeared to be more the objects either of choice or rejection, than others in the ſame claſs. Thus, in the firſt claſs, health appeared evidently preferable to ſtrength, and ſtrength to agility; reputation to power, and power to riches. And thus too, in the ſecond

PART VII.

claſs, ſickneſs was more to be avoided than unwieldineſs of body, ignominy than poverty, and poverty than the loſs of power. Virtue and the propriety of conduct conſiſted in chooſing and rejecting all different objects and circumſtances according as they were by nature rendered more or leſs the objects of choice or rejection; in ſelecting always from among the ſeveral objects of choice preſented to us, that which was moſt to be choſen, when we could not obtain them all; and in ſelecting too, out of the ſeveral objects of rejection offered to us, that which was leaſt to be avoided, when it was not in our power to avoid them all. By chooſing and rejecting with this juſt and accurate diſcernment, by thus beſtowing upon every object the preciſe degree of attention it deſerved, according to the place which it held in this natural ſcale of things, we maintained, according to the Stoics, that perfect rectitude of conduct which conſtituted the eſſence of virtue. This was what they called to live conſiſtently, to live according to nature, and to obey thoſe laws and directions which nature, or the Author of nature, had preſcribed for our conduct.

So far the Stoical idea of propriety and virtue is not very different from that of Ariſtotle and the ancient Peripatetics.

Among thoſe primary objects which nature had recommended to us as eligible, was the proſperity of our family, of our relations, of our friends, of our country, of mankind, and of the univerſe in general. Nature, too, had taught

taught us, that as the prosperity of two was preferable to that of one, that of many, or of all, must be infinitely more so. That we ourselves were but one, and that consequently wherever our prosperity was inconsistent with that, either of the whole, or of any considerable part of the whole, it ought, even in our own choice, to yield to what was so vastly preferable. As all the events in this world were conducted by the providence of a wise, powerful, and good God, we might be assured that whatever happened tended to the prosperity and perfection of the whole. If we ourselves, therefore, were in poverty, in sickness, or in any other calamity, we ought, first of all, to use our utmost endeavours, so far as justice and our duty to others would allow, to rescue ourselves from this disagreeable circumstance. But if, after all we could do, we found this impossible, we ought to rest satisfied that the order and perfection of the universe required that we should in the mean time continue in this situation. And as the prosperity of the whole should, even to us, appear preferable to so insignificant a part as ourselves, our situation, whatever it was, ought from that moment to become the object of our liking, if we would maintain that complete propriety and rectitude of sentiment and conduct in which consisted the perfection of our nature. If, indeed, any opportunity of extricating ourselves should offer, it became our duty to embrace it. The order of the universe, it was evident, no longer required our continuance in

SECT. II.

PART VII.

this ſituation, and the great Director of the world plainly called upon us to leave it, by ſo clearly pointing out the road which we were to follow. It was the ſame caſe with the adverſity of our relations, our friends, our country. If, without violating any more ſacred obligation, it was in our power to prevent or put an end to their calamity, it undoubtedly was our duty to do ſo. The propriety of action, the rule which Jupiter had given us for the direction of our conduct, evidently required this of us. But if it was altogether out of our power to do either, we ought then to conſider this event as the moſt fortunate which could poſſibly have happened; becauſe we might be aſſured that it tended moſt to the proſperity and order of the whole, which was what we ourſelves, if we were wiſe and equitable, ought moſt of all to deſire. It was our own final intereſt conſidered as a part of that whole, of which the proſperity ought to be, not only the principal, but the ſole object of our deſire.

"In what ſenſe," ſays Epictetus, "are ſome "things ſaid to be according to our nature, "and others contrary to it? It is in that ſenſe "in which we conſider ourſelves as ſeparated "and detached from all other things. For thus "it may be ſaid to be according to the nature of "the foot to be always clean. But if you conſider "it as a foot, and not as ſomething detached "from the reſt of the body, it muſt behove it "ſometimes to trample in the dirt, and ſome-"times to tread upon thorns, and ſometimes, "too, to be cut off for the ſake of the whole "body;

"body; and if it refuses this, it is no longer "a foot. Thus, too, ought we to conceive "with regard to ourselves. What are you? "A man. If you consider yourself as something "separated and detached, it is agreeable to "your nature to live to old age, to be rich, to "be in health. But if you consider yourself as "a man, and as a part of a whole, upon account "of that whole, it will behove you sometimes "to be in sickness, sometimes to be exposed to "the inconveniency of a sea voyage, sometimes "to be in want; and at last, perhaps, to die "before your time. Why then do you com-"plain? Do not you know that by doing so, "as the foot ceases to be a foot, so you cease "to be a man?"

A wise man never complains of the destiny of Providence, nor thinks the universe in confusion when he is out of order. He does not look upon himself as a whole, separated and detached from every other part of nature, to be taken care of by itself and for itself. He regards himself in the light in which he imagines the great genius of human nature, and of the world, regards him. He enters, if I may say so, into the sentiments of that divine Being, and considers himself as an atom, a particle, of an immense and infinite system, which must and ought to be disposed of, according to the conveniency of the whole. Assured of the wisdom which directs all the events of human life, whatever lot befalls him, he accepts it with joy, satisfied that, if he had known all the connections and

T dependencies of the different parts of the universe, it is the very lot which he himself would have wished for. If it is life, he is contented to live; and if it is death, as nature must have no further occasion for his presence here, he willingly goes where he is appointed. I accept, said a cynical philosopher, whose doctrines were in this respect the same as those of the Stoics, I accept, with equal joy and satisfaction, whatever fortune can befall me. Riches or poverty, pleasure or pain, health or sickness, all is alike: nor would I desire that the Gods should in any respect change my destination. If I was to ask of them any thing beyond what their bounty has already bestowed, it should be that they would inform me before-hand what it was their pleasure should be done with me, that I might of my own accord place myself in this situation, and demonstrate the cheerfulness with which I embraced their allotment. If I am going to sail, says Epictetus, I chuse the best ship and the best pilot, and I wait for the fairest weather that my circumstances and duty will allow. Prudence and propriety, the principles which the Gods have given me for the direction of my conduct, require this of me; but they require no more: and if, notwithstanding, a storm arises, which neither the strength of the vessel nor the skill of the pilot are likely to withstand, I give myself no trouble about the consequence. All that I had to do is done already. The directors of my conduct never command me to be miserable, to be anxious, desponding, or afraid.

afraid. Whether we are to be drowned, or to come to a harbour, is the buſineſs of Jupiter, not mine. I leave it entirely to his determination, nor ever break my reſt with conſidering which way he is likely to decide it, but receive whatever comes with equal indifference and ſecurity.

SECT. II.

From this perfect confidence in that benevolent wiſdom which governs the univerſe, and from this entire reſignation to whatever order that wiſdom might think proper to eſtabliſh, it neceſſarily followed, that, to the Stoical wiſe man, all the events of human life muſt be in a great meaſure indifferent. His happineſs conſiſted altogether, firſt, in the contemplation of the happineſs and perfection of the great ſyſtem of the univerſe, of the good government of the great republic of Gods and men, of all rational and ſenſible beings; and, ſecondly, in diſcharging his duty, in acting properly in the affairs of this great republic whatever little part that wiſdom had aſſigned to him. The propriety or impropriety of his endeavours might be of great conſequence to him. Their ſucceſs or diſappointment could be of none at all; could excite no paſſionate joy or ſorrow, no paſſionate deſire or averſion. If he preferred ſome events to others, if ſome ſituations were the objects of his choice and others of his rejection, it was not becauſe he regarded the one as in themſelves in any reſpect better than the other, or thought that his own happineſs would be more complete in what is called the fortunate than in what is regarded

PART VII.

regarded as the diſtreſsful ſituation; but becauſe the propriety of action, the rule which the Gods had given him for the direction of his conduct, required him to chuſe and reject in this manner. All his affections were abſorbed and ſwallowed up in two great affections; in that for the diſcharge of his own duty, and in that for the greateſt poſſible happineſs of all rational and ſenſible beings. For the gratification of this latter affection, he reſted with the moſt perfect ſecurity upon the wiſdom and power of the great Superintendant of the univerſe. His ſole anxiety was about the gratification of the former; not about the event, but about the propriety of his own endeavours. Whatever the event might be, he truſted to a ſuperior power and wiſdom for turning it to promote that great end which he himſelf was moſt deſirous of promoting.

This propriety of chuſing and rejecting, though originally pointed out to us, and as it were recommended and introduced to our acquaintance by the things, and for the ſake of the things, choſen and rejected; yet when we had once become thoroughly acquainted with it, the order, the grace, the beauty which we diſcerned in this conduct, the happineſs which we felt reſulted from it, neceſſarily appeared to us of much greater value than the actual obtaining of all the different objects of choice, or the actual avoiding of all thoſe of rejection. From the obſervation of this propriety aroſe the happineſs and the glory; from the neglect

of

of it, the misery and the disgrace of human nature.

But to a wise man, to one whose passions were brought under perfect subjection to the ruling principles of his nature, the exact observation of this propriety was equally easy upon all occasions. Was he in prosperity, he returned thanks to Jupiter for having joined him with circumstances which were easily mastered, and in which there was little temptation to do wrong. Was he in adversity, he equally returned thanks to the director of this spectacle of human life, for having opposed to him a vigorous athlete, over whom, though the contest was likely to be more violent, the victory was more glorious, and equally certain. Can there be any shame in that distress which is brought upon us without any fault of our own, and in which we behave with perfect propriety? There can, therefore, be no evil, but, on the contrary, the greatest good and advantage. A brave man exults in those dangers in which, from no rashness of his own, his fortune has involved him. They afford an opportunity of exercising that heroic intrepidity, whose exertion gives the exalted delight which flows from the consciousness of superior propriety and deserved admiration. One who is master of all his exercises has no aversion to measure his strength and activity with the strongest. And, in the same manner, one who is master of all his passions, does not dread any circumstance in which the Superintendant of the universe may think proper to

place

PART VII.

place him. The bounty of that divine Being has provided him with virtues which render him ſuperior to every ſituation. If it is pleaſure, he has temperance to refrain from it; if it is pain, he has conſtancy to bear it; if it is danger or death, he has magnanimity and fortitude to deſpiſe it. The events of human life can never find him unprepared, or at a loſs how to maintain that propriety of ſentiment and conduct which, in his own apprehenſion, conſtitutes at once his glory and his happineſs.

Human life the Stoics appear to have conſidered as a game of great ſkill; in which, however, there was a mixture of chance, or of what is vulgarly underſtood to be chance. In ſuch games the ſtake is commonly a trifle, and the whole pleaſure of the game ariſes from playing well, from playing fairly, and playing ſkilfully. If notwithſtanding all his ſkill, however, the good player ſhould, by the influence of chance, happen to loſe, the loſs ought to be a matter, rather of merriment, than of ſerious ſorrow. He has made no falſe ſtroke; he has done nothing which he ought to be aſhamed of; he has enjoyed completely the whole pleaſure of the game. If, on the contrary, the bad player, notwithſtanding all his blunders, ſhould, in the ſame manner, happen to win, his ſucceſs can give him but little ſatisfaction. He is mortified by the remembrance of all the faults which he committed. Even during the play he can enjoy no part of the pleaſure which it is capable of affording. From ignorance of the rules of the game, fear

r and doul hesitation are the disagree-
le sentiments that precede almost every stroke
ich he plays; and when he has played it, the
rtification of finding it a gross blunder, com-
nly completes the unpleasing circle of his sen-
ions. Human life, with all the advantages
ich can possibly attend it, ought, according
the Stoics, to be regarded but as a mere two-
ny stake; a matter by far too insignificant
merit any anxious concern. Our only an-
us concern ought to be, not about the stake,
t about the proper method of playing. If we
ced our happiness in winning the stake, we
ced it in what depended upon causes beyond
power, and out of our direction. We neces-
ly exposed ourselves to perpetual fear and
xiness, and frequently to grievous and mor-
ing disappointments. If we placed it in
ying well, in playing fairly, in playing wisely
skilfully; in the propriety of our own con-
t in short; we placed it in what, by proper
ipline, education, and attention, might be
gether in our own power, and under our
direction. Our happiness was perfectly
re, and beyond the reach of fortune. The
t of our actions, if it was out of our power,
equally out of our concern, and we could
r feel either fear or anxiety about it; nor
suffer any grievous, or even any serious
ppointment.

Human life itself, as well as every different
antage or disadvantage which can attend it,
ht, they said, according to different circum-

 stances,

PART VII.

ſtances, be the proper object either of our choice or of our rejection. If, in our actual ſituation, there were more circumſtances agreeable to nature than contrary to it; more circumſtances which were the objects of choice than of rejection; life, in this caſe, was, upon the whole, the proper object of choice, and the propriety of conduct required that we ſhould remain in it. If, on the other hand, there were, in our actual ſituation, without any probable hope of amendment, more circumſtances contrary to nature than agreeable to it; more circumſtances which were the objects of rejection than of choice; life itſelf, in this caſe, became, to a wiſe man, the object of rejection, and he was not only at liberty to remove out of it, but the propriety of conduct, the rule which the Gods had given him for the direction of his conduct, required him to do ſo. I am ordered, ſays Epictetus, not to dwell at Nicopolis. I do not dwell there. I am ordered not to dwell at Athens. I do not dwell at Athens. I am ordered not to dwell in Rome. I do not dwell in Rome. I am ordered to dwell in the little and rocky iſland of Gyaræ. I go and dwell there. But the houſe ſmokes in Gyaræ. If the ſmoke is moderate, I will bear it, and ſtay there. If it is exceſſive, I will go to a houſe from whence no tyrant can remove me. I keep in mind always that the door is open, that I can walk out when I pleaſe, and retire to that hoſpitable houſe which is at all times open to all the world; for beyond my undermoſt garment, beyond

beyond my body, no man living has any power over me. If your ſituation is upon the whole diſagreeable; if your houſe ſmokes too much for you, ſaid the Stoics, walk forth by all means. But walk forth without repining; without murmuring or complaining. Walk forth calm, contented, rejoicing, returning thanks to the Gods, who, from their infinite bounty, have opened the ſafe and quiet harbour of death, at all times ready to receive us from the ſtormy ocean of human life; who have prepared this ſacred, this inviolable, this great aſylum, always open, always acceſſible; altogether beyond the reach of human rage and injuſtice; and large enough to contain both all thoſe who wiſh, and all thoſe who do not wiſh to retire to it: an aſylum which takes away from every man every pretence of complaining, or even of fancying that there can be any evil in human life, except ſuch as he may ſuffer from his own folly and weakneſs.

The Stoics, in the few fragments of their philoſophy which have come down to us, ſometimes talk of leaving life with a gaiety, and even with a levity, which, were we to conſider thoſe paſſages by themſelves, might induce us to believe that they imagined we could with propriety leave it whenever we had a mind, wantonly and capriciouſly, upon the ſlighteſt diſguſt or uneaſineſs. "When you ſup with ſuch "a perſon," ſays Epictetus, "you complain of "the long ſtories which he tells you about his "Myſian wars. 'Now my friend, ſays he,

PART VII.

"having told you how I took possession of an "eminence at such a place, I will tell you how I "was besieged in such another place.' But if "you have a mind not to be troubled with his "long stories, do not accept of his supper. If "you accept of his supper, you have not the "least pretence to complain of his long stories. "It is the same case with what you call the "evils of human life. Never complain of that "of which it is at all times in your power to "rid yourself." Notwithstanding this gaiety and even levity of expression, however, the alternative of leaving life, or of remaining in it, was, according to the Stoics, a matter of the most serious and important deliberation. We ought never to leave it till we were distinctly called upon to do so by that superintending Power which had originally placed us in it. But we were to consider ourselves as called upon to do so, not merely at the appointed and unavoidable term of human life. Whenever the providence of that superintending Power had rendered our condition in life upon the whole the proper object rather of rejection than of choice; the great rule which he had given us for the direction of our conduct, then required us to leave it. We might then be said to hear the awful and benevolent voice of that divine Being distinctly calling upon us to do so.

It was upon this account that, according to the Stoics, it might be the duty of a wise man to remove out of life though he was perfectly happy; while, on the contrary, it might be the duty

duty of a weak man to remain in it, though he was neceſſarily miſerable. If, in the ſituation of the wiſe man, there were more circumſtances which were the natural objects of rejection than of choice, the whole ſituation became the object of rejection, and the rule which the Gods had given him for the direction of his conduct, required that he ſhould remove out of it as ſpeedily as particular circumſtances might render convenient. He was, however, perfectly happy even during the time that he might think proper to remain in it. He had placed his happineſs, not in obtaining the objects of his choice, or in avoiding thoſe of his rejection; but in always chooſing and rejecting with exact propriety; not in the ſucceſs, but in the fitneſs of his endeavours and exertions. If, in the ſituation of the weak man, on the contrary, there were more circumſtances which were the natural objects of choice than of rejection; his whole ſituation became the proper object of choice, and it was his duty to remain in it. He was unhappy, however, from not knowing how to uſe thoſe circumſtances. Let his cards be ever ſo good, he did not know how to play them, and could enjoy no ſort of real ſatisfaction, either in the progreſs, or in the event of the game, in whatever manner it might happen to turn out*.

The propriety, upon ſome occaſions, of voluntary death, though it was, perhaps, more

* See Cicero de finibus, lib. 3. c. 13. Olivet's edition.

 insisted

PART VII. infisted upon by the Stoics, than by any other sect of ancient philosophers, was, however, a doctrine common to them all, even to the peaceable and indolent Epicureans. During the age in which flourished the founders of all the principal sects of ancient philosophy; during the Peloponnesian war and for many years after its conclusion, all the different republics of Greece were, at home, almost always distracted by the most furious factions; and abroad, involved in the most sanguinary wars, in which each fought, not merely for superiority or dominion, but either completely to extirpate all its enemies, or, what was not less cruel, to reduce them into the vilest of all states, that of domestic slavery, and to sell them, man, woman, and child, like so many herds of cattle, to the highest bidder in the market. The smallness of the greater part of those states, too, rendered it, to each of them, no very improbable event, that it might itself fall into that very calamity which it had so frequently, either, perhaps, actually inflicted, or at least attempted to inflict upon some of its neighbours. In this disorderly state of things, the most perfect innocence, joined to both the highest rank and the greatest public services, could give no security to any man that, even at home and among his own relations and fellow-citizens, he was not, at some time or another, from the prevalence of some hostile and furious faction, to be condemned to the most cruel and ignominious punishment. If he was taken prisoner in war, or if the city of

which

which he was a member was conquered, he was expoſed, if poſſible, to ſtill greater injuries and inſults. But every man naturally, or rather neceſſarily, familiarizes his imagination with the diſtreſſes to which he foreſees that his ſituation may frequently expoſe him. It is impoſſible that a ſailor ſhould not frequently think of ſtorms and ſhipwrecks, and foundering at ſea, and of how he himſelf is likely both to feel and to act upon ſuch occaſions. It was impoſſible, in the ſame manner, that a Grecian patriot or hero ſhould not familiarize his imagination with all the different calamities to which he was ſenſible his ſituation muſt frequently, or rather conſtantly expoſe him. As an American ſavage prepares his death-ſong, and conſiders how he ſhould act when he has fallen into the hands of his enemies, and is by them put to death in the moſt lingering tortures, and amidſt the inſults and deriſion of all the ſpectators; ſo a Grecian patriot or hero could not avoid frequently employing his thoughts in conſidering what he ought both to ſuffer and to do in baniſhment, in captivity, when reduced to ſlavery, when put to the torture, when brought to the ſcaffold. But the philoſophers of all the different ſects very juſtly repreſented virtue; that is, wiſe, juſt, firm and temperate conduct; not only as the moſt probable, but as the certain and infallible road to happineſs even in this life. This conduct, however, could not always exempt, and might even ſometimes expoſe the perſon who followed it to all the calamities which were incident to

PART VII. that unſettled ſituation of public affairs. They endeavoured, therefore, to ſhow that happineſs was either altogether, or at leaſt in a great meaſure, independent of fortune; the Stoics, that it was ſo altogether; the Academic and Peripatetic philoſophers, that it was ſo in a great meaſure. Wiſe, prudent, and good conduct was, in the firſt place, the conduct moſt likely to enſure ſucceſs in every ſpecies of undertaking; and ſecondly, though it ſhould fail of ſucceſs, yet the mind was not left without conſolation. The virtuous man might ſtill enjoy the complete approbation of his own breaſt; and might ſtill feel that, how untoward ſoever things might be without, all was calm and peace and concord within. He might generally comfort himſelf, too, with the aſſurance that he poſſeſſed the love and eſteem of every intelligent and impartial ſpectator, who could not fail both to admire his conduct, and to regret his misfortune.

Thoſe philoſophers endeavoured, at the ſame time, to ſhow, that the greateſt misfortunes to which human life was liable, might be ſupported more eaſily than was commonly imagined. They endeavoured to point out the comforts which a man might ſtill enjoy when reduced to poverty, when driven into baniſhment, when expoſed to the injuſtice of popular clamour, when labouring under blindneſs, under deafneſs, in the extremity of old age, upon the approach of death. They pointed out, too, the conſiderations which might contribute to ſupport his conſtancy under

under the agonies of pain and even of torture, in ſickneſs, in ſorrow for the loſs of children, for the death of friends and relations, &c. The few fragments which have come down to us of what the ancient philoſophers had written upon theſe ſubjects, form, perhaps, one of the moſt inſtructive, as well as one of the moſt intereſting remains of antiquity. The ſpirit and manhood of their doctrines make a wonderful contraſt with the deſponding, plaintive, and whining tone of ſome modern ſyſtems.

SECT. II.

But while thoſe ancient philoſophers endeavoured in this manner to ſuggeſt every conſideration which could, as Milton ſays, arm the obdured breaſt with ſtubborn patience, as with triple ſteel; they, at the ſame time, laboured above all to convince their followers that there neither was nor could be any evil in death; and that, if their ſituation became at any time too hard for their conſtancy to ſupport, the remedy was at hand, the door was open, and they might, without fear, walk out when they pleaſed. If there was no world beyond the preſent, Death, they ſaid, could be no evil; and if there was another world, the Gods muſt likewiſe be in that other, and a juſt man could fear no evil while under their protection. Thoſe philoſophers, in ſhort, prepared a death-ſong, if I may ſay ſo, which the Grecian patriots and heroes might make uſe of upon the proper occaſions; and, of all the different ſects, the Stoics, I think it muſt be acknowledged, had prepared by far the moſt animated and ſpirited ſong.

PART VII.

Suicide, however, never ſeems to have been very common among the Greeks. Excepting Cleomenes, I cannot at preſent recollect any very illuſtrious either patriot or hero of Greece, who died by his own hand. The death of Ariſtomenes is as much beyond the period of true hiſtory as that of Ajax. The common ſtory of the death of Themiſtocles, though within that period, bears upon its face all the marks of a moſt romantic fable. Of all the Greek heroes whoſe lives have been written by Plutarch, Cleomenes appears to have been the only one who periſhed in this manner. Theramines, Socrates, and Phocion, who certainly did not want courage, ſuffered themſelves to be ſent to priſon, and ſubmitted patiently to that death to which the injuſtice of their fellow-citizens had condemned them. The brave Eumenes allowed himſelf to be delivered up, by his own mutinous ſoldiers, to his enemy Antigonus, and was ſtarved to death, without attempting any violence. The gallant Philopœmen ſuffered himſelf to be taken priſoner by the Meſſenians, was thrown into a dungeon, and was ſuppoſed to have been privately poiſoned. Several of the philoſophers, indeed, are ſaid to have died in this manner; but their lives have been ſo very fooliſhly written, that very little credit is due to the greater part of the tales which are told of them. Three different accounts have been given of the death of Zeno the Stoic. One is, that after enjoying, for ninety-eight years, the moſt perfect ſtate of health, he happened, in going

going out of his ſchool, to fall; and though he ſuffered no other damage than that of breaking or diſlocating one of his fingers, he ſtruck the ground with his hand, and, in the words of the Niobe of Euripides, ſaid, *I come, why doeſt thou call me?* and immediately went home and hanged himſelf. At that great age, one ſhould think, he might have had a little more patience. Another account is, that, at the ſame age, and in conſequence of a like accident, he ſtarved himſelf to death. The third account is, that, at ſeventy-two years of age, he died in the natural way; by far the moſt probable account of the three, and ſupported too by the authority of a cotemporary, who muſt have had every opportunity of being well-informed; of Perſicus, originally the ſlave, and afterwards the friend and diſciple of Zeno. The firſt account is given by Apollonius of Tyre, who flouriſhed about the time of Auguſtus Cæſar, between two and three hundred years after the death of Zeno. I know not who is the author of the ſecond account. Apollonius, who was himſelf a Stoic, had probably thought it would do honour to the founder of a ſect which talked ſo much about voluntary death, to die in this manner by his own hand. Men of letters, though, after their death, they are frequently more talked of than the greateſt princes or ſtateſmen of their times, are generally, during their life, ſo obſcure and inſignificant that their adventures are ſeldom recorded by cotemporary hiſtorians. Thoſe of after-ages, in order to ſatisfy the public curi-

ofity, and having no authentic documents either to ſupport or to contradict their narratives, ſeem frequently to have faſhioned them according to their own fancy; and almoſt always with a great mixture of the marvellous. In this particular caſe the marvellous, though ſupported by no authority, ſeems to have prevailed over the probable, though ſupported by the beſt. Diogenes Laertius plainly gives the preference to the ſtory of Apollonius. Lucian and Lactantius appear both to have given credit to that of the great age and of the violent death.

This faſhion of voluntary death appears to have been much more prevalent among the proud Romans, than it ever was among the lively, ingenious, and accommodating Greeks. Even among the Romans, the faſhion ſeems not to have been eſtabliſhed in the early and, what are called, the virtuous ages of the republic. The common ſtory of the death of Regulus, though probably a fable, could never have been invented, had it been ſuppoſed that any diſhonour could fall upon that hero, from patiently ſubmitting to the tortures which the Carthaginians are ſaid to have inflicted upon him. In the later ages of the republic, ſome diſhonour, I apprehend, would have attended this ſubmiſſion. In the different civil wars which preceded the fall of the commonwealth, many of the eminent men of all the contending parties choſe rather to periſh by their own hands, than to fall into thoſe of their enemies. The death of Cato, celebrated by Cicero, and cenſured by Cæſar, and

become the ſubject of a very ſerious controverſy between, perhaps, the two moſt illuſtrious advocates that the world had ever beheld, ſtamped a character of ſplendour upon this method of dying which it ſeems to have retained for ſeveral ages after. The eloquence of Cicero was ſuperior to that of Cæſar. The admiring prevailed greatly over the cenſuring party, and the lovers of liberty, for many ages afterwards, looked up to Cato as to the moſt venerable martyr of the republican party. The head of a party, the Cardinal de Retz obſerves, may do what he pleaſes; as long as he retains the confidence of his own friends, he can never do wrong; a maxim of which His Eminence had himſelf, upon ſeveral occaſions, an opportunity of experiencing the truth. Cato, it ſeems, joined to his other virtues that of an excellent bottle companion. His enemies accuſed him of drunkenneſs, but, ſays Seneca, whoever objected this vice to Cato, will find it much eaſier to prove that drunkenneſs is a virtue, than that Cato could be addicted to any vice.

Under the Emperors this method of dying ſeems to have been, for a long time, perfectly faſhionable. In the epiſtles of Pliny we find an account of ſeveral perſons who choſe to die in this manner, rather from vanity and oſtentation, it would ſeem, than from what would appear, even to a ſober and judicious Stoic, any proper or neceſſary reaſon. Even the ladies, who are ſeldom behind in following the faſhion, ſeem frequently to have choſen, moſt unneceſſarily, to

PART VII.

to die in this manner; and, like the ladies in Bengal, to accompany, upon ſome occaſions, their huſbands to the tomb. The prevalence of this faſhion certainly occaſioned many deaths which would not otherwiſe have happened. All the havock, however, which this, perhaps the higheſt exertion of human vanity and impertinence, could occaſion, would, probably, at no time, be very great.

The principle of ſuicide, the principle which would teach us, upon ſome occaſions, to conſider that violent action as an object of applauſe and approbation, ſeems to be altogether a refinement of philoſophy. Nature, in her ſound and healthful ſtate, ſeems never to prompt us to ſuicide. There is, indeed, a ſpecies of melancholy (a diſeaſe to which human nature, among its other calamities, is unhappily ſubject) which ſeems to be accompanied with, what one may call, an irreſiſtible appetite for ſelf-deſtruction. In circumſtances often of the higheſt external proſperity, and ſometimes too, in ſpite even of the moſt ſerious and deeply impreſſed ſentiments of religion, this diſeaſe has frequently been known to drive its wretched victims to this fatal extremity. The unfortunate perſons who periſh in this miſerable manner, are the proper objects, not of cenſure, but of commiſeration. To attempt to puniſh them, when they are beyond the reach of all human puniſhment, is not more abſurd than it is unjuſt. That puniſhment can fall only on their ſurviving friends and relations, who are always perfectly innocent,

innocent, and to whom the loſs of their friend, in this diſgraceful manner, muſt always be alone a very heavy calamity. Nature, in her ſound and healthful ſtate, prompts us to avoid diſtreſs upon all occaſions; upon many occaſions to defend ourſelves againſt it, though at the hazard, or even with the certainty of periſhing in that defence. But, when we have neither been able to defend ourſelves from it, nor have periſhed in that defence, no natural principle, no regard to the approbation of the ſuppoſed impartial ſpectator, to the judgment of the man within the breaſt, ſeems to call upon us to eſcape from it by deſtroying ourſelves. It is only the conſciouſneſs of our own weakneſs, of our own incapacity to ſupport the calamity with proper manhood and firmneſs, which can drive us to this reſolution. I do not remember to have either read or heard of any American ſavage, who, upon being taken priſoner by ſome hoſtile tribe, put himſelf to death, in order to avoid being afterwards put to death in torture, and amidſt the inſults and mockery of his enemies. He places his glory in ſupporting thoſe torments with manhood, and in retorting thoſe inſults with tenfold contempt and deriſion.

SECT. II.

This contempt of life and death, however, and, at the ſame time, the moſt entire ſubmiſſion to the order of Providence; the moſt complete contentment with every event which the current of human affairs could poſſibly caſt up, may be conſidered as the two fundamental doctrines upon which reſted the whole fabric of Stoical morality.

PART VII.

morality. The independent and ſpirited, but often harſh Epictetus, may be conſidered as the great apoſtle of the firſt of thoſe doctrines: the mild, the humane, the benevolent Antoninus, of the ſecond.

The emancipated ſlave of Epaphriditus, who, in his youth, had been ſubjected to the inſolence of a brutal maſter, who, in his riper years, was, by the jealouſy and caprice of Domitian, baniſhed from Rome and Athens, and obliged to dwell at Nicopolis, and who, by the ſame tyrant, might expect every moment to be ſent to Gyaræ, or, perhaps, to be put to death; could preſerve his tranquillity only by foſtering in his mind the moſt ſovereign contempt of human life. He never exults ſo much, accordingly; his eloquence is never ſo animated as when he repreſents the futility and nothingneſs of all its pleaſures and all its pains.

The good-natured Emperor, the abſolute ſovereign of the whole civilized part of the world, who certainly had no peculiar reaſon to complain of his own allotment, delights in expreſſing his contentment with the ordinary courſe of things, and in pointing out beauties even in thoſe parts of it where vulgar obſervers are not apt to ſee any. There is a propriety and even an engaging grace, he obſerves, in old age as well as in youth; and the weakneſs and decrepitude of the one ſtate are as ſuitable to nature as the bloom and vigour of the other. Death, too, is juſt as proper a termination of old age, as youth is of childhood, or manhood of

of youth. As we frequenty ſay, he remarks upon another occaſion, that the phyſician has ordered to ſuch a man to ride on horſeback, or to use the cold bath, or to walk barefooted; ſo ought we to ſay, that Nature, the great conductor and phyſician of the univerſe, has ordered to ſuch a man a diſeaſe, or the amputation of a limb, or the loſs of a child. By the preſcriptions of ordinary phyſicians the patient ſwallows many a bitter potion; undergoes many a painful operation. From the very uncertain hope, however, that health may be the conſequence, he gladly ſubmits to all. The harſheſt preſcriptions of the great Phyſician of nature, the patient may, in the ſame manner, hope will contribute to his own health, to his own final proſperity and happineſs: and he may be perfectly aſſured that they not only contribute, but are indiſpenſably neceſſary to the health, to the proſperity and happineſs of the univerſe, to the furtherance and advancement of the great plan of Jupiter. Had they not been ſo, the univerſe would never have produced them; its all-wiſe Architect and Conductor would never have ſuffered them to happen. As all, even the ſmalleſt of the co-exiſtent parts of the univerſe, are exactly fitted to one another, and all contribute to compoſe one immenſe and connected ſyſtem; ſo all, even apparently the moſt inſignificant of the ſucceſſive events which follow one another, make parts, and neceſſary parts, of that great chain of cauſes and effects which had no beginning, and which will have no end; and which, as they

PART VII. they all neceſſarily reſult from the original arrangement and contrivance of the whole; ſo they are all eſſentially neceſſary, not only to its proſperity, but to its continuance and preſervation. Whoever does not cordially embrace whatever befals him, whoever is ſorry that it has befallen him, whoever wiſhes that it had not befallen him, wiſhes, ſo far as in him lies, to ſtop the motion of the univerſe, to break that great chain of ſucceſſion, by the progreſs of which that ſyſtem can alone be continued and preſerved, and, for ſome little conveniency of his own, to diſorder and diſcompoſe the whole machine of the world. "O world," ſays he, in another place, "all things are ſuitable to me "which are ſuitable to thee. Nothing is too "early or too late to me which is ſeaſonable for "thee. All is fruit to me which thy ſeaſons "bring forth. From thee are all things; in "thee are all things; for thee are all things. "One man ſays, O beloved city of Cecrops. "Wilt not thou ſay, O beloved city of God?"

From theſe very ſublime doctrines the Stoics, or at leaſt ſome of the Stoics, attempted to deduce all their paradoxes.

The Stoical wiſe man endeavoured to enter into the views of the great Superintendant of the univerſe, and to ſee things in the ſame light in which that divine Being beheld them. But, to the great Superintendant of the univerſe, all the different events which the courſe of his providence may bring forth, what to us appear the ſmalleſt and the greateſt, the burſting of a bubble,

bubble, as Mr. Pope ſays, and that of a world, for example, were perfectly equal, were equally parts of that great chain which he had predeſtined from all eternity, were equally the effects of the ſame unerring wiſdom, of the ſame univerſal and boundleſs benevolence. To the Stoical wiſe man, in the ſame manner, all thoſe different events were perfectly equal. In the courſe of thoſe events, indeed, a little department, in which he had himſelf ſome little management and direction, had been aſſigned to him. In this department he endeavoured to act as properly as he could, and to conduct himſelf according to thoſe orders which, he underſtood, had been preſcribed to him. But he took no anxious or paſſionate concern either in the ſucceſs, or in the diſappointment of his own moſt faithful endeavours. The higheſt proſperity and the total deſtruction of that little department, of that little ſyſtem which had been in ſome meaſure committed to his charge, were perfectly indifferent to him. If thoſe events had depended upon him, he would have choſen the one, and he would have rejected the other. But as they did not depend upon him, he truſted to a ſuperior wiſdom, and was perfectly ſatisfied that the event which happened, whatever it might be, was the very event which he himſelf, had he known all the connections and dependencies of things, would moſt earneſtly and devoutly have wiſhed for. Whatever he did under the influence and direction of thoſe principles was equally perfect; and when he

PART VII.

ſtretched out his finger, to give the example which they commonly made uſe of, he performed an action in every reſpect as meritorious, as worthy of praiſe and admiration, as when he laid down his life for the ſervice of his country. As, to the great Superintendant of the univerſe, the greateſt and the ſmalleſt exertions of his power, the formation and diſſolution of a world, the formation and diſſolution of a bubble, were equally eaſy, were equally admirable, and equally the effects of the ſame divine wiſdom and benevolence; ſo, to the Stoical wiſe man, what we would call the great action required no more exertion than the little one, was equally eaſy, proceeded from exactly the ſame principles, was in no reſpect more meritorious, nor worthy of any higher degree of praiſe and admiration.

As all thoſe who had arrived at this ſtate of perfection, were equally happy; ſo all thoſe who fell in the ſmalleſt degree ſhort of it, how nearly ſoever they might approach to it, were equally miſerable. As the man, they ſaid, who was but an inch below the ſurface of the water, could no more breathe than he who was an hundred yards below it; ſo the man who had not completely ſubdued all his private, partial, and ſelfiſh paſſions, who had any other earneſt deſire but that for the univerſal happineſs, who had not completely emerged from that abyſs of miſery and diſorder into which his anxiety for the gratification of thoſe private, partial, and ſelfiſh paſſions had involved him, could no more breathe the free air of liberty and independency, could

could no more enjoy the ſecurity and happineſs of the wiſe man, than he who was moſt remote from that ſituation. As all the actions of the wiſe man were perfect and equally perfect; ſo all thoſe of the man who had not arrived at this ſupreme wiſdom were faulty, and, as ſome Stoics pretended, equally faulty. As one truth, they ſaid, could not be more true, nor one falſehood more falſe than another; ſo an honourable action could not be more honourable, nor a ſhameful one more ſhameful than another. As in ſhooting at a mark, the man who miſſed it by an inch had equally miſſed it with him who had done ſo by a hundred yards; ſo the man who, in what to us appears the moſt inſignificant action, had acted improperly and without a ſufficient reaſon, was equally faulty with him who had done ſo in, what to us appears, the moſt important; the man who has killed a cock, for example, improperly and without a ſufficient reaſon, with him who had murdered his father.

SECT. II.

If the firſt of thoſe two paradoxes ſhould appear ſufficiently violent, the ſecond is evidently too abſurd to deſerve any ſerious conſideration. It is, indeed, ſo very abſurd that one can ſcarce help ſuſpecting that it muſt have been in ſome meaſure miſunderſtood or miſrepreſented. At any rate, I cannot allow myſelf to believe that ſuch men as Zeno or Cleanthes, men, it is ſaid, of the moſt ſimple as well as of the moſt ſublime eloquence, could be the authors, either of theſe, or of the greater part

PART VII. of the other Stoical paradoxes, which are in general mere impertinent quibbles, and do so little honour to their syſtem that I ſhall give no further account of them. I am diſpoſed to impute them rather to Chryſippus, the diſciple and follower, indeed, of Zeno and Cleanthes, but who, from all that has been delivered down to us concerning him, ſeems to have been a mere dialectical pedant, without taſte or elegance of any kind. He may have been the firſt who reduced their doctrines into a ſcholaſtic or technical ſyſtem of artificial definitions, diviſions, and ſubdiviſions; one of the moſt effectual expedients, perhaps, for extinguiſhing whatever degree of good ſenſe there may be in any moral or metaphyſical doctrine. Such a man may very eaſily be ſuppoſed to have underſtood too literally ſome animated expreſſions of his maſters in deſcribing the happineſs of the man of perfect virtue, and the unhappineſs of whoever fell ſhort of that character.

The Stoics in general ſeem to have admitted that there might be a degree of proficiency in thoſe who had not advanced to perfect virtue and happineſs. They diſtributed thoſe proficients into different claſſes, according to the degree of their advancement; and they called the imperfect virtues which they ſuppoſed them capable of exerciſing, not rectitudes, but proprieties, fitneſſes, decent and becoming actions, for which a plauſible or probable reaſon could be aſſigned, what Cicero expreſſes by the Latin word *officia*, and Seneca, I think more exactly, by

that of *convenientia*. The doctrine of those perfect, but attainable virtues, seems to have ıstituted what we may call the practical mo-ty of the Stoics. It is the subject of Cicero's ices; and is said to have been that of another ık written by Marcus Brutus, but which is v lost.

SECT. II.

The plan and system which Nature has tched out for our conduct, seems to be altoher different from that of the Stoical philohy.

By Nature the events which immediately ct that little department in which we our-es have some little management and direc-ı, which immediately affect ourselves, our nds, our country, are the events which in-est us the most, and which chiefly excite our ires and aversions, our hopes and fears, our s and sorrows. Should those passions be, at they are very apt to be, too vehement, ture has provided a proper remedy and cor-tion. The real or even the imaginary pre-ce of the impartial spectator, the authority of man within the breast, is always at hand to rawe them into the proper tone and temper noderation.

f, notwithstanding our most faithful exer-ıs, all the events which can affect this little artment, should turn out the most unfortu-e and disastrous, Nature has by no means us without consolation. That consolation y be drawn, not only from the complete robation of the man within the breast, but,

PART VII.

if possible, from a still nobler and more generous principle, from a firm reliance upon, and a reverential submission to, that benevolent wisdom which directs all the events of human life, and which, we may be assured, would never have suffered those misfortunes to happen, had they not been indispensably necessary for the good of the whole.

Nature has not prescribed to us this sublime contemplation as the great business and occupation of our lives. She only points it out to us as the consolation of our misfortunes. The Stoical philosophy prescribes it as the great business and occupation of our lives. That philosophy teaches us to interest ourselves earnestly and anxiously in no events, external to the good order of our own minds, to the propriety of our own choosing and rejecting, except in those which concern a department where we neither have nor ought to have any sort of management or direction, the department of the great Superintendant of the universe. By the perfect apathy which it prescribes to us, by endeavouring, not merely to moderate, but to eradicate all our private, partial, and selfish affections, by suffering us to feel for whatever can befall ourselves, our friends, our country, not even the sympathetic and reduced passions of the impartial spectator, it endeavours to render us altogether indifferent and unconcerned in the success or miscarriage of every thing which Nature has prescribed to us as the proper business and occupation of our lives.

The

reasonings of philosophy, it may be said, though they may confound and perplex the understanding, can never break down the necessary connection which Nature has established between causes and their effects. The causes which naturally excite our desires and aversions, our hopes and fears, our joys and sorrows, would no doubt, notwithstanding all the reasonings of Stoicism, produce upon each individual, according to the degree of his actual sensibility, their proper and necessary effects. The judgments of the man within the breast, however, might be a good deal affected by those reasonings, and that great inmate might be taught by them to attempt to overawe all our private, partial, and selfish affections into a more or less perfect tranquillity. To direct the judgments of this inmate is the great purpose of all systems of morality. That the Stoical philosophy had very great influence upon the character and conduct of its followers, cannot be doubted; and that, though it might sometimes incite them to unnecessary violence, its general tendency was to animate them to actions of the most heroic magnanimity and most extensive benevolence.

SECT. II.

IV. Besides these ancient, there are some modern systems, according to which virtue consists in propriety; or in the suitableness of the affection from which we act, to the cause or object which excites it. The system of Dr. Clark, which places virtue in acting according to the relations of things, in regulating our

PART VII. conduct according to the fitness or incon[illegible] which there may be in the application of certain actions to certain things, or to certain relations: that of Mr. Woollaston, which places it in acting according to the truth of things, according to their proper nature and essence, or in treating them as what they really are, and not as what they are not: that of my Lord Shaftesbury, which places it in maintaining a proper balance of the affections, and in allowing no passion to go beyond its proper sphere; are all of them more or less inaccurate descriptions of the same fundamental idea.

None of those systems either give, or even pretend to give, any precise or distinct measure by which this fitness or propriety of affection can be ascertained or judged of. That precise and distinct measure can be found no where but in the sympathetic feelings of the impartial and well-informed spectator.

The description of virtue, besides, which is either given, or at least meant and intended to be given in each of those systems, for some of the modern authors are not very fortunate in their manner of expressing themselves, is no doubt quite just, so far as it goes. There is no virtue without propriety, and wherever there is propriety some degree of approbation is due. But still this description is imperfect. For though propriety is an essential ingredient in every virtuous action, it is not always the sole ingredient. Beneficent actions have in them another quality by which they appear

appear not only to deſerve approbation but recompenſe. None of thoſe ſyſtems account either eaſily or ſufficiently for that ſuperior degree of eſteem which ſeems due to ſuch actions, or for that diverſity of ſentiment which they naturally excite. Neither is the deſcription of vice more complete. For, in the ſame manner, though impropriety is a neceſſary ingredient in every vicious action, it is not always the ſole ingredient; and there is often the higheſt degree of abſurdity and impropriety in very harmleſs and inſignificant actions. Deliberate actions, of a pernicious tendency to thoſe we live with, have, beſides their impropriety, a peculiar quality of their own by which they appear to deſerve, not only diſapprobation, but puniſhment; and to be the objects, not of diſlike merely, but of reſentment and revenge: and none of thoſe ſyſtems eaſily and ſufficiently account for that ſuperior degree of deteſtation which we feel for ſuch actions.

SECT. II.

CHAP. II.

Of thoſe Syſtems which make Virtue conſiſt in Prudence.

THE moſt ancient of thoſe ſyſtems which make virtue conſiſt in prudence, and of which any conſiderable remains have come down to us, is that of Epicurus, who is ſaid,

T however, to have b[illegible] leading principles of his philoſo[illegible] of thoſe who had gone before hi[illegible] particularly from Ariſtippus; though it is very probable, notwithſtanding this allegation of his enemies, that at leaſt his manner of applying thoſe principles was altogether his own.

According to Epicurus *, bodily pleaſure and pain were the ſole ultimate objects of natural deſire and averſion. That they were always the natural objects of thoſe paſſions, he thought required no proof. Pleaſure might, indeed, appear ſometimes to be avoided; not, however, becauſe it was pleaſure, but becauſe, by the enjoyment of it, we ſhould either forfeit ſome greater pleaſure, or expoſe ourſelves to ſome pain that was more to be avoided than this pleaſure was to be deſired. Pain, in the ſame manner, might appear ſometimes to be eligible; not, however, becauſe it was pain, but becauſe by enduring it we might either avoid a ſtill greater pain, or acquire ſome pleaſure of much more importance. That bodily pain and pleaſure, therefore, were always the natural objects of deſire and averſion, was, he thought, abundantly evident. Nor was it leſs ſo, he imagined, that they were the ſole ultimate objects of thoſe paſſions. Whatever elſe was either deſired or avoided, was ſo, according to him, upon account of its tendency to produce one or other of thoſe ſenſations. The tendency to procure

* See Cicero de finibus, lib. i. Diogenes L[illegible]x.

pleaſure

pleasure rendered power and riches desirable, as the contrary tendency to produce pain made poverty and insignificancy the objects of aversion. Honour and reputation were valued, because the esteem and love of those we live with were of the greatest consequence both to procure pleasure and to defend us from pain. Ignominy and bad fame, on the contrary, were to be avoided, because the hatred, contempt, and resentment of those we lived with, destroyed all security, and necessarily exposed us to the greatest bodily evils.

All the pleasures and pains of the mind were, according to Epicurus, ultimately derived from those of the body. The mind was happy when it thought of the past pleasures of the body, and hoped for others to come: and it was miserable when it thought of the pains which the body had formerly endured, and dreaded the same or greater thereafter.

But the pleasures and pains of the mind, though ultimately derived from those of the body, were vastly greater than their originals. The body felt only the sensation of the present instant, whereas the mind felt also the past and the future, the one by remembrance, the other by anticipation, and consequently both suffered and enjoyed much more. When we are under the greatest bodily pain, he observed, we shall always find, if we attend to it, that it is not the suffering of the present instant which chiefly torments us, but either the agonizing remembrance of the past, or the yet more horrible dread

T dread of the future. The pain of each inſtant, conſidered by itſelf, and cut off from all that goes before and all that comes after it, is a trifle, not worth the regarding. Yet this is all which the body can ever be ſaid to ſuffer. In the ſame manner, when we enjoy the greateſt pleaſure, we ſhall always find that the bodily ſenſation, the ſenſation of the preſent inſtant, makes but a ſmall part of our happineſs, that our enjoyment chiefly ariſes either from the cheerful recollection of the paſt, or the ſtill more joyous anticipation of the future, and that the mind always contributes by much the largeſt ſhare of the entertainment.

Since our happineſs and miſery, therefore, depended chiefly on the mind, if this part of our nature was well diſpoſed, if our thoughts and opinions were as they ſhould be, it was of little importance in what manner our body was affected. Though under great bodily pain, we might ſtill enjoy a conſiderable ſhare of happineſs, if our reaſon and judgment maintained their ſuperiority. We might entertain ourſelves with the remembrance of paſt, and with the hopes of future pleaſure; we might ſoften the rigour of our pains, by recollecting what it was which, even in this ſituation, we were under any neceſſity of ſuffering. That this was merely the bodily ſenſation, the pain of the preſent inſtant, which by itſelf could never be very great. That [illegible]r agony we ſuffered from the dread of its c[illegible]tinuance, was the effect of an opinion of the mi[illegible], which might

might be corrected by juſter ſentiments; by considering that, if our pains were violent, they would probably be of ſhort duration; and that if they were of long continuance, they would probably be moderate, and admit of many intervals of eaſe; and that, at any rate, death was always at hand and within call to deliver us, which as, according to him, it put an end to all ſenſation, either of pain or pleaſure, could not be regarded as an evil. When we are, ſaid he, death is not; and when death is, we are not; death therefore can be nothing to us.

SECT. II.

If the actual ſenſation of poſitive pain was in itſelf ſo little to be feared, that of pleaſure was ſtill leſs to be deſired. Naturally the ſenſation of pleaſure was much leſs pungent than that of pain. If, therefore, this laſt could take ſo very little from the happineſs of a well-diſpoſed mind, the other could add ſcarce any thing to it. When the body was free from pain and the mind from fear and anxiety, the ſuperadded ſenſation of bodily pleaſure could be of very little importance; and though it might diverſify, could not properly be ſaid to increaſe the happineſs of this ſituation.

In eaſe of body, therefore, and in ſecurity or tranquillity of mind, conſiſted, according to Epicurus, the moſt perfect ſtate of human nature, the moſt complete happineſs which man was capable of enjoying. To obtain this great end of natural deſire was the ſole object of all the virtues, which, according to him,

PART VII. were not desirable upon their own account, but upon account of their tendency to bring about this situation.

Prudence, for example, though, according to this philosophy, the source and principle of all the virtues, was not desirable upon its own account. That careful and laborious and circumspect state of mind, ever watchful and ever attentive to the most distant consequences of every action, could not be a thing pleasant or agreeable for its own sake, but upon account of its tendency to procure the greatest goods and to keep off the greatest evils.

To abstain from pleasure too, to curb and restrain our natural passions for enjoyment, which was the office of temperance, could never be desirable for its own sake. The whole value of this virtue arose from its utility, from its enabling us to postpone the present enjoyment for the sake of a greater to come, or to avoid a greater pain that might ensue from it. Temperance, in short, was nothing but prudence with regard to pleasure.

To support labour, to endure pain, to be exposed to danger or to death, the situations which fortitude would often lead us into, were surely still less the objects of natural desire. They were chosen only to avoid greater evils. We submitted to labour, in order to avoid the greater shame and pain of poverty, and we exposed ourselves to danger and to death in defence of our liberty and property, the means and instruments of pleasure and happiness; or in defence

defence of our country, in the ſafety of which our own was neceſſarily comprehended. Fortitude enabled us to do all this cheerfully, as the beſt which, in our preſent ſituation, could poſſibly be done, and was in reality no more than prudence, good judgment, and preſence of mind in properly appreciating pain, labour, and danger, always chooſing the leſs in order to avoid the greater. SECT. II.

It is the ſame caſe with juſtice. To abſtain from what is another's was not deſirable on its own account, and it could not ſurely be better for you, that I ſhould poſſeſs what is my own, than that you ſhould poſſeſs it. You ought, however, to abſtain from whatever belongs to me, becauſe by doing otherwiſe you will provoke the reſentment and indignation of mankind. The ſecurity and tranquillity of your mind will be entirely deſtroyed. You will be filled with fear and conſternation at the thought of that puniſhment which you will imagine that men are at all times ready to inflict upon you, and from which no power, no art, no concealment, will ever, in your own fancy, be ſufficient to protect you. That other ſpecies of juſtice which conſiſts in doing proper good offices to different perſons, according to the various relations of neighbours, kinſmen, friends, benefactors, ſuperiors, or equals, which they may ſtand in to us, is recommended by the ſame reaſons. To act properly in all theſe different relations procures us the eſteem and love of thoſe we live with; as to do otherwiſe excites

their contempt and hatred. By the one we naturally ſecure, by the other we neceſſarily endanger our own eaſe and tranquillity, the great and ultimate objects of all our deſires. The whole virtue of juſtice, therefore, the moſt important of all the virtues, is no more than diſcreet and prudent conduct with regard to our neighbours.

Such is the doctrine of Epicurus concerning the nature of virtue. It may ſeem extraordinary that this philoſopher, who is deſcribed as a perſon of the moſt amiable manners, ſhould never have obſerved, that, whatever may be the tendency of thoſe virtues, or of the contrary vices, with regard to our bodily eaſe and ſecurity, the ſentiments which they naturally excite in others are the objects of a much more paſſionate deſire or averſion than all their other conſequences; that to be amiable, to be reſpectable, to be the proper object of eſteem, is by every well-diſpoſed mind more valued than all the eaſe and ſecurity which love, reſpect, and eſteem can procure us; that, on the contrary, to be odious, to be contemptible, to be the proper object of indignation, is more dreadful than all that we can ſuffer in our body from hatred, contempt, or indignation; and that conſequently our deſire of the one character, and our averſion to the other, cannot ariſe from any regard to the effects which either of them is likely to produce upon the body.

This ſyſtem is, no doubt, altogether inconſiſtent with that which I have been endeavouring

to

to eſtabliſh. It is not difficult, however, to diſcover from what phaſis, if I may ſay ſo, from what particular view or aſpect of nature, this account of things derives its probability. By the wiſe contrivance of the Author of nature, virtue is upon all ordinary occaſions, even with regard to this life, real wiſdom, and the ſureſt and readieſt means of obtaining both ſafety and advantage. Our ſucceſs or diſappointment in our undertakings muſt very much depend upon the good or bad opinion which is commonly entertained of us, and upon the general diſpoſition of thoſe we live with, either to aſſiſt or to oppoſe us. But the beſt, the ſureſt, the eaſieſt, and the readieſt way of obtaining the advantageous and of avoiding the unfavourable judgments of others, is undoubtedly to render ourſelves the proper objects of the former and not of the latter. "Do you deſire," ſaid Socrates, "the reputation of a good muſician? "The only ſure way of obtaining it, is to be-"come a good muſician. Would you deſire "in the ſame manner to be thought capable "of ſerving your country either as a general or "as a ſtateſman? The beſt way in this caſe "too is really to acquire the art and experience "of war and government, and to become really "fit to be a general or a ſtateſman. And in the "ſame manner if you would be reckoned ſober, "temperate, juſt, and equitable, the beſt way "of acquiring this reputation is to become "ſober, temperate, juſt, and equitable. If "you can really render yourſelf amiable, re-

"ſpectable,

PART VII.

"ſpectable, and the proper object of eſteem, "there is no fear of your not ſoon acquiring "the love, the reſpect, and eſteem of thoſe "you live with." Since the practice of virtue, therefore, is in general ſo advantageous, and that of vice ſo contrary to our intereſt, the conſideration of thoſe oppoſite tendencies undoubtedly ſtamps an additional beauty and propriety upon the one, and a new deformity and impropriety upon the other. Temperance, magnanimity, juſtice, and beneficence, come thus to be approved of, not only under their proper characters, but under the additional character of the higheſt wiſdom and moſt real prudence. And in the ſame manner, the contrary vices of intemperance, puſillanimity, injuſtice, and either malevolence or ſordid ſelfiſhneſs, come to be diſapproved of, not only under their proper characters, but under the additional character of the moſt ſhort-ſighted folly and weakneſs. Epicurus appears in every virtue to have attended to this ſpecies of propriety only. It is that which is moſt apt to occur to thoſe who are endeavouring to perſuade others to regularity of conduct. When men by their practice, and perhaps too by their maxims, manifeſtly ſhew that the natural beauty of virtue is not like to have much effect upon them, how is it poſſible to move them but by repreſenting the folly of their conduct, and how much they themſelves are in the end likely to ſuffer by it?

By running up all the different virtues too to this one ſpecies of propriety, Epicurus indulged

dulged a propenſity, which is natural to all men, but which philoſophers in particular are apt to cultivate with a peculiar fondneſs, as the great means of diſplaying their ingenuity, the propenſity to account for all appearances from as few principles as poſſible. And he, no doubt, indulged this propenſity ſtill further, when he referred all the primary objects of natural deſire and averſion to the pleaſures and pains of the body. The great patron of the atomical philoſophy, who took ſo much pleaſure in deducing all the powers and qualities of bodies from the moſt obvious and familiar, the figure, motion, and arrangement of the ſmall parts of matter, felt no doubt a ſimilar ſatisfaction, when he accounted, in the ſame manner, for all the ſentiments and paſſions of the mind from thoſe which are moſt obvious and familiar.

The ſyſtem of Epicurus agreed with thoſe of Plato, Ariſtotle, and Zeno, in making virtue conſiſt in acting in the moſt ſuitable manner to obtain * primary objects of natural deſire. It differed from all of them in two other reſpects; firſt, in the account which it gave of thoſe primary objects of natural deſire; and ſecondly, in the account which it gave of the excellence of virtue, or of the reaſon why that quality ought to be eſteemed.

The primary objects of natural deſire conſiſted, according to Epicurus, in bodily pleaſure

* Prima naturæ.

 and

and pain, and in nothing elſe: whereas, according to the other three philoſophers, there were many other objects, ſuch as knowledge, ſuch as the happineſs of our relations, of our friends, of our country, which were ultimately deſirable for their own ſakes.

Virtue too, according to Epicurus, did not deſerve to be purſued for its own ſake, nor was itſelf one of the ultimate objects of natural appetite, but was eligible only upon account of its tendency to prevent pain and to procure eaſe and pleaſure. In the opinion of the other three, on the contrary, it was deſirable, not merely as the means of procuring the other primary objects of natural deſire, but as ſomething which was in itſelf more valuable than them all. Man, they thought, being born for action, his happineſs muſt conſiſt, not merely in the agreeableneſs of his paſſive ſenſations, but alſo in the propriety of his active exertions.

CHAP. III.

Of thoſe Syſtems which make Virtue conſiſt in Benevolence.

THE ſyſtem which makes virtue conſiſt in benevolence, though I think not ſo ancient as all of thoſe which I have already given an account of, is, however, of very great antiquity. It ſeems to have been the doctrine of the greater part

part of thoſe philoſophers who, about and after the age of Auguſtus, called themſelves Eclectics, who pretended to follow chiefly the opinions of Plato and Pythagoras, and who upon that account are commonly known by the name of the later Platoniſts. SECT. II.

In the divine nature, according to theſe authors, benevolence or love was the ſole principle of action, and directed the exertion of all the other attributes. The wiſdom of the Deity was employed in finding out the means for bringing about thoſe ends which his goodneſs ſuggeſted, as his infinite power was exerted to execute them. Benevolence, however, was ſtill the ſupreme and governing attribute, to which the others were ſubſervient, and from which the whole excellency, or the whole morality, if I may be allowed ſuch an expreſſion, of the divine operations, was ultimately derived. The whole perfection and virtue of the human mind conſiſted in ſome reſemblance or participation of the divine perfections, and, conſequently, in being filled with the ſame principle of benevolence and love which influenced all the actions of the Deity. The actions of men which flowed from this motive were alone truly praiſe-worthy, or could claim any merit in the ſight of the Deity. It was by actions of charity and love only that we could imitate, as became us, the conduct of God, that we could expreſs our humble and devout admiration of his infinite perfections, that by foſtering in our own minds

the ſame divine principle, we could bring our own affections to a greater reſemblance with his holy attributes, and thereby become more proper objects of his love and eſteem; till at laſt we arrived at that immediate converſe and communication with the Deity to which it was the great object of this philoſophy to raiſe us.

This ſyſtem, as it was much eſteemed by many ancient fathers of the Chriſtian church, ſo after the Reformation it was adopted by ſeveral divines of the moſt eminent piety and learning and of the moſt amiable manners; particularly, by Dr. Ralph Cudworth, by Dr. Henry More, and by Mr. John Smith of Cambridge. But of all the patrons of this ſyſtem, ancient or modern, the late Dr. Hutcheſon was undoubtedly, beyond all compariſon, the moſt acute, the moſt diſtinct, the moſt philoſophical, and what is of the greateſt conſequence of all, the ſobereſt and moſt judicious.

That virtue conſiſts in benevolence is a notion ſupported by many appearances in human nature. It has been obſerved already, that proper benevolence is the moſt graceful and agreeable of all the affections, that it is recommended to us by a double ſympathy, that as its tendency is neceſſarily beneficent, it is the proper object of gratitude and reward, and that upon all theſe accounts it appears to our natural ſentiments to poſſeſs a merit ſuperior to any other. It has been obſerved too, that even the weakneſſes of benevolence are not very diſagree-

able to us, whereas thoſe of every other paſſion are always extremely diſguſting. Who does not abhor exceſſive malice, exceſſive ſelfiſhneſs, or exceſſive reſentment? But the moſt exceſſive indulgence even of partial friendſhip is not ſo offenſive. It is the benevolent paſſions only which can exert themſelves without any regard or attention to propriety, and yet retain ſomething about them which is engaging. There is ſomething pleaſing even in mere inſtinctive good-will, which goes on to do good offices without once reflecting whether by this conduct it is the proper object either of blame or approbation. It is not ſo with the other paſſions. The moment they are deſerted, the moment they are unaccompanied by the ſenſe of propriety, they ceaſe to be agreeable.

As benevolence beſtows upon thoſe actions which proceed from it, a beauty ſuperior to all others, ſo the want of it, and much more the contrary inclination, communicates a peculiar deformity to whatever evidences ſuch a diſpoſition. Pernicious actions are often puniſhable for no other reaſon than becauſe they ſhew a want of ſufficient attention to the happineſs of our neighbour.

Beſides all this, Dr. Hutcheſon* obſerved, that whenever in any action, ſuppoſed to proceed from benevolent affections, ſome other motive had been diſcovered, our ſenſe of the merit of this action was juſt ſo far diminiſhed as

* See Inquiry concerning Virtue, ſect. 1. and 2.

this motive was believed to have influenced it. If an action, ſuppoſed to proceed from gratitude, ſhould be diſcovered to have ariſen from an expectation of ſome new favour, or if what was apprehended to proceed from public ſpirit, ſhould be found out to have taken its origin from the hope of a pecuniary reward, ſuch a diſcovery would entirely deſtroy all notion of merit or praiſe-worthineſs in either of theſe actions. Since, therefore, the mixture of any ſelfiſh motive, like that of a baſer alloy, diminiſhed or took away altogether the merit which would otherwiſe have belonged to any action, it was evident, he imagined, that virtue muſt conſiſt in pure and diſintereſted benevolence alone.

When thoſe actions, on the contrary, which are commonly ſuppoſed to proceed from a ſelfiſh motive, are diſcovered to have ariſen from a benevolent one, it greatly enhances our ſenſe of their merit. If we believed of any perſon that he endeavoured to advance his fortune from no other view but that of doing friendly offices, and of making proper returns to his benefactors, we ſhould only love and eſteem him the more. And this obſervation ſeemed ſtill more to confirm the concluſion, that it was benevolence only which could ſtamp upon any action the character of virtue.

Laſt of all, what, he imagined, was an evident proof of the juſtneſs of this account of virtue, in all the diſputes of caſuiſts concerning the rectitude of conduct, the public good, he ob-

obſerved, was the ſtandard to which they conſtantly referred; thereby univerſally acknowledging that whatever tended to promote the happineſs of mankind was right and laudable and virtuous, and the contrary, wrong, blamable, and vicious. In the late debates about paſſive obedience and the right of reſiſtance, the ſole point in controverſy among men of ſenſe was, whether univerſal ſubmiſſion would probably be attended with greater evils than temporary inſurrections when privileges were invaded. Whether what, upon the whole, tended moſt to the happineſs of mankind, was not alſo morally good, was never once, he ſaid, made a queſtion.

Since benevolence, therefore, was the only motive which could beſtow upon any action the character of virtue, the greater the benevolence which was evidenced by any action, the greater the praiſe which muſt belong to it.

Thoſe actions which aimed at the happineſs of a great community, as they demonſtrated a more enlarged benevolence than thoſe which aimed only at that of a ſmaller ſyſtem, ſo were they, likewiſe, proportionally the more virtuous. The moſt virtuous of all affections, therefore, was that which embraced as its object the happineſs of all intelligent beings. The leaſt virtuous, on the contrary, of thoſe to which the character of virtue could in any reſpect belong, was that which aimed no further than at the happineſs of an individual, ſuch as a ſon, a brother, a friend.

In directing all our actions to promote the greateſt poſſible good, in ſubmitting all inferior

affections to the desire of the general happiness of mankind, in regarding one's self but as one of the many, whose prosperity was to be pursued no further than it was consistent with, or conducive to that of the whole, consisted the perfection of virtue.

Self-love was a principle which could never be virtuous in any degree or in any direction. It was vicious whenever it obstructed the general good. When it had no other effect than to make the individual take care of his own happiness, it was merely innocent, and though it deserved no praise, neither ought it to incur any blame. Those benevolent actions which were performed, notwithstanding some strong motive from self-interest, were the more virtuous upon that account. They demonstrated the strength and vigour of the benevolent principle.

Dr. Hutcheson * was so far from allowing self-love to be in any case a motive of virtuous actions, that even a regard to the pleasure of self-approbation, to the comfortable applause of our own consciences, according to him, diminished the merit of a benevolent action. This was a selfish motive, he thought, which, so far as it contributed to any action, demonstrated the weakness of that pure and disinterested benevolence which could alone stamp upon the conduct of man the character of virtue. In the common judgments of mankind, however, this regard to the approbation of our own minds is

* Inquiry concerning virtue, sect. 2. art. 4.; also Illustrations on the moral sense, sect. 5. last paragraph.

so

ſo far from being conſidered as what can in any reſpect diminiſh the virtue of any action, that it is rather looked upon as the ſole motive which deſerves the appellation of virtuous.

Such is the account given of the nature of virtue in this amiable ſyſtem, a ſyſtem which has a peculiar tendency to nouriſh and ſupport in the human heart the nobleſt and the moſt agreeable of all affections, and not only to check the injuſtice of ſelf-love, but in ſome meaſure to diſcourage that principle altogether, by repreſenting it as what could never reflect any honour upon thoſe who were influenced by it.

As ſome of the other ſyſtems which I have already given an account of, do not ſufficiently explain from whence ariſes the peculiar excellency of the ſupreme virtue of beneficence, ſo this ſyſtem ſeems to have the contrary defect, of not ſufficiently explaining from whence ariſes our approbation of the inferior virtues of prudence, vigilance, circumſpection, temperance, conſtancy, firmneſs. The view and aim of our affections, the beneficent and hurtful effects which they tend to produce, are the only qualities at all attended to in this ſyſtem. Their propriety and impropriety, their ſuitableneſs and unſuitableneſs, to the cauſe which excites them, are diſregarded altogether.

Regard to our own private happineſs and intereſt, too, appear upon many occaſions very laudable principles of action. The habits of œconomy, induſtry, diſcretion, attention, and application of thought, are generally ſuppoſed

to

PART VII.

to be cultivated from ſelf-intereſted motives, and at the ſame time are apprehended to be very praiſe-worthy qualities, which deſerve the eſteem and approbation of every body. The mixture of a ſelfiſh motive, it is true, ſeems often to ſully the beauty of thoſe actions which ought to ariſe from a benevolent affection. The cauſe of this, however, is not that ſelf-love can never be the motive of a virtuous action, but that the benevolent principle appears in this particular caſe to want its due degree of ſtrength, and to be altogether unſuitable to its object. The character, therefore, ſeems evidently imperfect, and upon the whole to deſerve blame rather than praiſe. The mixture of a benevolent motive in an action to which ſelf-love alone ought to be ſufficient to prompt us, is not ſo apt indeed to diminiſh our ſenſe of its propriety, or of the virtue of the perſon who performs it. We are not ready to ſuſpect any perſon of being defective in ſelfiſhneſs. This is by no means the weak ſide of human nature, or the failing of which we are apt to be ſuſpicious. If we could really believe, however, of any man, that, was it not from a regard to his family and friends, he would not take that proper care of his health, his life, or his fortune, to which ſelf-preſervation alone ought to be ſufficient to prompt him, it would undoubtedly be a failing, though one of thoſe amiable failings which render a perſon rather the object of pity than of contempt or hatred. It would ſtill, however, ſomewhat diminiſh the dignity and reſpectable-

neſs

neſs of his character. Careleſſneſs and want of œconomy are univerſally diſapproved of, not, however, as proceeding from a want of benevolence, but from a want of the proper attention to the objects of ſelf-intereſt.

Though the ſtandard by which caſuiſts frequently determine what is right or wrong in human conduct, be its tendency to the welfare or diſorder of ſociety, it does not follow that a regard to the welfare of ſociety ſhould be the ſole virtuous motive of action, but only that, in any competition, it ought to caſt the balance againſt all other motives.

Benevolence may, perhaps, be the ſole principle of action in the Deity, and there are ſeveral, not improbable, arguments which tend to perſuade us that it is ſo. It is not eaſy to conceive what other motive an independent and all-perfect Being, who ſtands in need of nothing external, and whoſe happineſs is complete in himſelf, can act from. But whatever may be the caſe with the Deity, ſo imperfect a creature as man, the ſupport of whoſe exiſtence requires ſo many things external to him, muſt often act from many other motives. The condition of human nature were peculiarly hard, if thoſe affections, which, by the very nature of our being, ought frequently to influence our conduct, could upon no occaſion appear virtuous, or deſerve eſteem and commendation from any body.

Thoſe three ſyſtems, that which places virtue in propriety, that which places it in prudence, and

and that which makes it consist in benevolence, are the principal accounts which have been given of the nature of virtue. To one or other of them, all the other descriptions of virtue, how different soever they may appear, are easily reducible.

That system which places virtue in obedience to the will of the Deity, may be accounted either among those which make it consist in prudence, or among those which make it consist in propriety. When it is asked, why we ought to obey the will of the Deity, this question, which would be impious and absurd in the highest degree, if asked from any doubt that we ought to obey him, can admit but of two different answers. It must either be said that we ought to obey the will of the Deity because he is a Being of infinite power, who will reward us eternally if we do so, and punish us eternally if we do otherwise: or it must be said, that independent of any regard to our own happiness, or to rewards and punishments of any kind, there is a congruity and fitness that a creature should obey its creator, that a limited and imperfect being should submit to one of infinite and incomprehensible perfections. Besides one or other of these two, it is impossible to conceive that any other answer can be given to this question. If the first answer be the proper one, virtue consists in prudence, or in the proper pursuit of our own final interest and happiness; since it is upon this account that we are obliged to obey the will of the Deity. If the

the ſecond anſwer be the proper one, virtue muſt conſiſt in propriety, ſince the ground of our obligation to obedience is the ſuitableneſs or congruity of the ſentiments of humility and ſubmiſſion to the ſuperiority of the object which excites them.

That ſyſtem which places virtue in utility, coincides too with that which makes it conſiſt in propriety. According to this ſyſtem, all thoſe qualities of the mind which are agreeable or advantageous, either to the perſon himſelf or to others, are approved of as virtuous, and the contrary diſapproved of as vicious. But the agreeableneſs or utility of any affection depends upon the degree which it is allowed to ſubſiſt in. Every affection is uſeful when it is confined to a certain degree of moderation; and every affection is diſadvantageous when it exceeds the proper bounds. According to this ſyſtem therefore, virtue conſiſts not in any one affection, but in the proper degree of all the affections. The only difference between it and that which I have been endeavouring to eſtabliſh, is, that it makes utility, and not ſympathy, or the correſpondent affection of the ſpectator, the natural and original meaſure of this proper degree.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

Of licentious Systems.

ALL those systems, which I have hitherto given an account of, suppose that there is a real and essential distinction between vice and virtue, whatever these qualities may consist in. There is a real and essential difference between the propriety and impropriety of any affection, between benevolence and any other principle of action, between real prudence and short sighted folly or precipitate rashness. In the main too all of them contribute to encourage the praiseworthy, and to discourage the blamable disposition.

It may be true, perhaps, of some of them, that they tend, in some measure, to break the balance of the affections, and to give the mind a particular bias to some principles of action, beyond the proportion that is due to them. The ancient systems, which place virtue in propriety, seem chiefly to recommend the great, the awful, and the respectable virtues, the virtues of self-government and self-command; fortitude, magnanimity, independency upon fortune, the contempt of all outward accidents, of pain, poverty, exile, and death. It is in these great exertions that the noblest propriety of conduct is displayed. The soft, the amiable, the gentle virtues, all the virtues of indulgent humanity are,

are, in comparison, but little insisted upon, and seem, on the contrary, by the Stoics in particular, to have been often regarded as mere weaknesses, which it behoved a wise man not to harbour in his breast. SECT. II.

The benevolent system, on the other hand, while it fosters and encourages all those milder virtues in the highest degree, seems entirely to neglect the more awful and respectable qualities of the mind. It even denies them the appellation of virtues. It calls them moral abilities, and treats them as qualities which do not deserve the same sort of esteem and approbation, that is due to what is properly denominated virtue. All those principles of action which aim only at our own interest, it treats, if that be possible, still worse. So far from having any merit of their own, they diminish, it pretends, the merit of benevolence, when they co-operate with it: and prudence, it is asserted, when employed only in promoting private interest, can never even be imagined a virtue.

That system, again, which makes virtue consist in prudence only, while it gives the highest encouragement to the habits of caution, vigilance, sobriety, and judicious moderation, seems to degrade equally both the amiable and respectable virtues, and to strip the former of all their beauty, and the latter of all their grandeur.

But notwithstanding these defects, the general tendency of each of those three systems is to encourage the best and most laudable habits of the human mind and it were well for society,

 if,

PART VII.

if, either mankind in general, or even thoſe few who pretend to live according to any philoſophical rule, were to regulate their conduct by the precepts of any one of them. We may learn from each of them ſomething that is both valuable and peculiar. If it was poſſible, by precept and exhortation, to inſpire the mind with fortitude and magnanimity, the ancient ſyſtems of propriety would ſeem ſufficient to do this. Or if it was poſſible, by the ſame means, to ſoften it into humanity, and to awaken the affections of kindneſs and general love towards thoſe we live with, ſome of the pictures with which the benevolent ſyſtem preſents us, might ſeem capable of producing this effect. We may learn from the ſyſtem of Epicurus, though undoubtedly the moſt imperfect of all the three, how much the practice of both the amiable and reſpectable virtues is conducive to our own intereſt, to our own eaſe and ſafety and quiet even in this life. As Epicurus placed happineſs in the attainment of eaſe and ſecurity, he exerted himſelf in a particular manner to ſhow that virtue was, not merely the beſt and the ſureſt, but the only means of acquiring thoſe invaluable poſſeſſions. The good effects of virtue, upon our inward tranquillity and peace of mind, are what other philoſophers have chiefly celebrated. Epicurus, without neglecting this topic, has chiefly inſiſted upon the influence of that amiable quality on our outward proſperity and ſafety. It was upon this account that his writings were ſo much ſtudied in the ancient world by men of all different

ent philoſophical parties. It is from him that cero, the great enemy of the Epicurean tem, borrows his moſt agreeable proofs that tue alone is ſufficient to ſecure happineſs. neca, though a Stoic, the ſect moſt oppoſite that of Epicurus, yet quotes this philoſopher re frequently than any other.

There is, however, another ſyſtem which ns to take away altogether the diſtinction ween vice and virtue, and of which the tency is, upon that account, wholly pernicious: ean the ſyſtem of Dr. Mandeville. Though notions of this author are in almoſt every ect erroneous, there are, however, ſome earances in human nature, which, when ved in a certain manner, ſeem at firſt ſight avour them. Theſe, deſcribed and exagted by the lively and humorous, though ſe and ruſtic eloquence of Dr. Mandeville, thrown upon his doctrines an air of truth probability which is very apt to impoſe upon unſkilful.

r. Mandeville conſiders whatever is done from ſe of propriety, from a regard to what is nendable and praiſe-worthy, as being done a love of praiſe and commendation, or as lls it from vanity. Man, he obſerves, is ally much more intereſted in his own hap- than in that of others, and it is impoſſible his heart he can ever really prefer their rity to his own. Whenever he appears to we may be aſſured that he impoſes upon d that he is then acting from the ſame

 ſelfiſh

PART VII.

ſelfiſh motives as at all other times. Among his other ſelfiſh paſſions, vanity is one of the ſtrongeſt, and he is always eaſily flattered and greatly delighted with the applauſes of thoſe about him. When he appears to ſacrifice his own intereſt to that of his companions, he knows that this conduct will be highly agreeable to their ſelf-love, and that they will not fail to expreſs their ſatisfaction by beſtowing upon him the moſt extravagant praiſes. The pleaſure which he expects from this, over-balances, in his opinion, the intereſt which he abandons in order to procure it. His conduct, therefore, upon this occaſion, is in reality juſt as ſelfiſh, and ariſes from juſt as mean a motive as upon any other. He is flattered, however, and he flatters himſelf with the belief that it is entirely diſintereſted; ſince, unleſs this was ſuppoſed, it would not ſeem to merit any commendation either in his own eyes or in thoſe of others. All public ſpirit, therefore, all preference of public to private intereſt, is, according to him, a mere cheat and impoſition upon mankind; and that human virtue which is ſo much boaſted of, and which is the occaſion of ſo much emulation among men, is the mere offſpring of flattery begot upon pride.

Whether the moſt generous and public-ſpirited actions may not, in ſome ſenſe, be regarded as proceeding from ſelf-love, I ſhall not at preſent examine. The deciſion of this queſtion is not, I apprehend, of any importance towards eſtabliſhing the reality of virtue, ſince ſelf-

ſelf-love may frequently be a virtuous motive of action. I ſhall only endeavour to ſhow that the deſire of doing what is honourable and noble, of rendering ourſelves the proper objects of eſteem and approbation, cannot with any propriety be called vanity. Even the love of well-grounded fame and reputation, the deſire of acquiring eſteem by what is really eſtimable, does not deſerve that name. The firſt is the love of virtue, the nobleſt and the beſt paſſion of human nature. The ſecond is the love of true glory, a paſſion inferior no doubt to the former, but which in dignity appears to come immediately after it. He is guilty of vanity who deſires praiſe for qualities which are either not praiſeworthy in any degree, or not in that degree in which he expects to be praiſed for them; who ſets his character upon the frivolous ornaments of dreſs and equipage, or upon the equally frivolous accompliſhments of ordinary behaviour. He is guilty of vanity who deſires praiſe for what indeed very well deſerves it, but what he perfectly knows does not belong to him. The empty coxcomb who gives himſelf airs of importance which he has no title to, the ſilly liar who aſſumes the merit of adventures which never happened, the fooliſh plagiary who gives himſelf out for the author of what he has no pretenſions to, are properly accuſed of this paſſion. He too is ſaid to be guilty of vanity who is not contented with the ſilent ſentiments of eſteem and approbation, who ſeems to be fonder of their noiſy expreſſions and acclama-

tions than of the ſentiments themſelves, who is never ſatisfied but when his own praiſes are ringing in his ears, and who ſolicits with the moſt anxious importunity all external marks of reſpect, is fond of titles, of compliments, of being viſited, of being attended, of being taken notice of in public places with the appearance of deference and attention. This frivolous paſſion is altogether different from either of the two former, and is the paſſion of the loweſt and the leaſt of mankind, as they are of the nobleſt and the greateſt.

But though theſe three paſſions, the deſire of rendering ourſelves the proper objects of honour and eſteem, or of becoming what is honourable and eſtimable; the deſire of acquiring honour and eſteem by really deſerving thoſe ſentiments; and the frivolous deſire of praiſe at any rate, are widely different; though the two former are always approved of, while the latter never fails to be deſpiſed; there is, however, a certain remote affinity among them, which, exaggerated by the humourous and diverting eloquence of this lively author, has enabled him to impoſe upon his readers. There is an affinity between vanity and the love of true glory, as both theſe paſſions aim at acquiring eſteem and approbation. But they are different in this, that the one is a juſt, reaſonable, and equitable paſſion, while the other is unjuſt, abſurd, and ridiculous. The man who deſires eſteem for what is really eſtimable, deſires nothing but what he is juſtly entitled to, and what cannot

be refuſed him without ſome ſort of injury. He, on the contrary, who deſires it upon any other terms, demands what he has no juſt claim to. The firſt is eaſily ſatisfied, is not apt to be jealous or ſuſpicious that we do not eſteem him enough, and is ſeldom ſolicitous about receiving many external marks of our regard. The other, on the contrary, is never to be ſatisfied, is full of jealouſy and ſuſpicion that we do not eſteem him ſo much as he deſires, becauſe he has ſome ſecret conſciouſneſs that he deſires more than he deſerves. The leaſt neglect of ceremony, he conſiders as a mortal affront, and as an expreſſion of the moſt determined contempt. He is reſtleſs and impatient, and perpetually afraid that we have loſt all reſpect for him, and is upon this account always anxious to obtain new expreſſions of eſteem, and cannot be kept in temper but by continual attendance and adulation.

There is an affinity too between the deſire of becoming what is honourable and eſtimable, and the deſire of honour and eſteem, between the love of virtue and the love of true glory. They reſemble one another not only in this reſpect, that both aim at really being what is honourable and noble, but even in that reſpect in which the love of true glory reſembles what is properly called vanity, ſome reference to the ſentiments of others. The man of the greateſt magnanimity, who deſires virtue for its own ſake, and is moſt indifferent about what actually are the opinions of mankind with regard to him, is ſtill, however, delighted with the

thoughts of what they ſhould be, with the conſciouſneſs that though he may neither be honoured nor applauded, he is ſtill the proper object of honour and applauſe, and that if mankind were cool and candid and conſiſtent with themſelves, and properly informed of the motives and circumſtances of his conduct, they would not fail to honour and applaud him. Though he deſpiſes the opinions which are actually entertained of him, he has the higheſt value for thoſe which ought to be entertained of him. That he might think himſelf worthy of thoſe honourable ſentiments, and, whatever was the idea which other men might conceive of his character, that when he ſhould put himſelf in their ſituation, and conſider, not what was, but what ought to be their opinion, he ſhould always have the higheſt idea of it himſelf, was the great and exalted motive of his conduct. As even in the love of virtue, therefore, there is ſtill ſome reference, though not to what is, yet to what in reaſon and propriety ought to be, the opinion of others, there is even in this reſpect ſome affinity between it, and the love of true glory. There is, however, at the ſame time, a very great difference between them. The man who acts ſolely from a regard to what is right and fit to be done, from a regard to what is the proper object of eſteem and approbation, though theſe ſentiments ſhould never be beſtowed upon him, acts from the moſt ſublime and godlike motive which human nature is even capable of conceiving. The man, on the other hand,

hand, who while he defires to merit approba- SECT. II.
tion is at the fame time anxious to obtain it, though he too is laudable in the main, yet his motives have a greater mixture of human infirmity. He is in danger of being mortified by the ignorance and injuftice of mankind, and his happinefs is expofed to the envy of his rivals and the folly of the public. The happinefs of the other, on the contrary, is altogether fecure and independent of fortune, and of the caprice of thofe he lives with. The contempt and hatred which may be thrown upon him by the ignorance of mankind, he confiders as not belonging to him, and is not at all mortified by it. Mankind defpife and hate him from a falfe notion of his character and conduct. If they knew him better, they would efteem and love him. It is not him whom, properly fpeaking, they hate and defpife, but another perfon whom they miftake him to be. Our friend, whom we fhould meet at a mafquerade in the garb of our enemy, would be more diverted than mortified, if under that difguife we fhould vent our indignation againft him. Such are the fentiments of a man of real magnanimity, when expofed to unjuft cenfure. It feldom happens, however, that human nature arrives at this degree of firmnefs. Though none but the weakeft and moft worthlefs of mankind are much delighted with falfe glory, yet, by a ftrange inconfiftency, falfe ignominy is often capable of mortifying thofe who appear the moft refolute and determined.

T Dr. Mandeville is not ſatisfied th repreſenting the frivolous motive of vanity, t e ſource of all thoſe actions which are commonly accounted virtuous. He endeavours to point out the imperfection of human virtue in many other reſpects. In every caſe, he pretends, it falls ſhort of that complete ſelf-denial which it pretends to, and, inſtead of a conqueſt, is commonly no more than a concealed indulgence of our paſſions. Wherever our reſerve with regard to pleaſure falls ſhort of the moſt aſcetic abſtinence, he treats it as groſs luxury and ſenſuality. Every thing, according to him, is luxury which exceeds what is abſolutely neceſſary for the ſupport of human nature, ſo that there is vice even in the uſe of a clean ſhirt, or of a convenient habitation. The indulgence of the inclination to ſex, in the moſt lawful union, he conſiders as the ſame ſenſuality with the moſt hurtful gratification of that paſſion, and derides that temperance and that chaſtity which can be practiſed at ſo cheap a rate. The ingenious ſophiſtry of his reaſoning, is here, as upon many other occaſions, covered by the ambiguity of language. There are ſome of our paſſions which have no other names except thoſe which mark the diſagreeable and offenſive degree. The ſpectator is more apt to take notice of them in this degree than in any other. When they ſhock his own ſentiments, when they give him ſome ſort of antipathy and uneaſineſs, he ı eceſſarily obliged to attend to them, and is fr n thence

natu-

naturally led to give them a name. When they fall in with the natural ſtate of his own mind, he is very apt to overlook them altogether, and either gives them no name at all, or, if he give them any, it is one which marks rather the ſubjection and reſtraint of the paſſion, than the degree which it ſtill is allowed to ſubſiſt in, after it is ſo ſubjected and reſtrained. Thus the common names* of the love of pleaſure, and of the love of ſex, denote a vicious and offenſive degree of thoſe paſſions. The words temperance and chaſtity, on the other hand, ſeem to mark rather the reſtraint and ſubjection which they are kept under, than the degree which they are ſtill allowed to ſubſiſt in. When he can ſhow, therefore, that they ſtill ſubſiſt in ſome degree, he imagines, he has entirely demoliſhed the reality of the virtues of temperance and chaſtity, and ſhown them to be mere impoſitions upon the inattention and ſimplicity of mankind. Thoſe virtues, however, do not require an entire inſenſibility to the objects of the paſſions which they mean to govern. They only aim at reſtraining the violence of thoſe paſſions ſo far as not to hurt the individual, and neither diſturb nor offend the ſociety.

It is the great fallacy of Dr. Mandeville's book † to repreſent every paſſion as wholly vicious, which is ſo in any degree and in any direction. It is thus that he treats every thing as vanity which has any reference, either to what

* Luxury and luſt. † Fable of the Bees.

are,

T are, or to what ought to be the ſentiments of others: and it is by means of this ſophiſtry, that he eſtabliſhes his favourite concluſion, that private vices are public benefits. If the love of magnificence, a taſte for the elegant arts and improvements of human life, for whatever is agreeable in dreſs, furniture, or equipage, for architecture, ſtatuary, painting, and muſic, is to be regarded as luxury, ſenſuality, and oſtentation, even in thoſe whoſe ſituation allows, without any inconveniency, the indulgence of thoſe paſſions, it is certain that luxury, ſenſuality, and oſtentation are public benefits: ſince without the qualities upon which he thinks proper to beſtow ſuch opprobious names, the arts of refinement could never find encouragement, and muſt languiſh for want of employment. Some popular aſcetic doctrines which had been current before his time, and which placed virtue in the entire extirpation and annihilation of all our paſſions, were the real foundation of this licentious ſyſtem. It was eaſy for Dr. Mandeville to prove, firſt, that this entire conqueſt never actually took place among men; and ſecondly, that if it was to take place univerſally, it would be pernicious to ſociety, by putting an end to all induſtry and commerce, and in a manner to the whole buſineſs of human life. By the firſt of theſe propoſitions, he ſeemed to prove that there was no real virtue, and that what pretended to be ſuch, was a mere cheat and impoſition upon mankind; and by the ſecond, that private vices were public benefits, ſince

ſince without them no ſociety could proſper or flouriſh.

Such is the ſyſtem of Dr. Mandeville, which once made ſo much noiſe in the world, and which, though, perhaps, it never gave occaſion to more vice than what would have been without it, at leaſt taught that vice, which aroſe from other cauſes, to appear with more effrontery, and to avow the corruption of its motives with a profligate audaciouſneſs which had never been heard of before.

But how deſtructive ſoever this ſyſtem may appear, it could never have impoſed upon ſo great a number of perſons, nor have occaſioned ſo general an alarm among thoſe who are the friends of better principles, had it not in ſome reſpects bordered upon the truth. A ſyſtem of natural philoſophy may appear very plauſible, and be for a long time very generally received in the world, and yet have no foundation in nature, nor any ſort of reſemblance to the truth. The vortices of Des Cartes were regarded by a very ingenious nation, for near a century together, as a moſt ſatisfactory account of the revolutions of the heavenly bodies. Yet it has been demonſtrated, to the conviction of all mankind, that theſe pretended cauſes of thoſe wonderful effects, not only do not actually exiſt, but are utterly impoſſible, and if they did exiſt, could produce no ſuch effects as are aſcribed to them. But it is otherwiſe with ſyſtems of moral philoſophy, and an author who pretends to account for the origin of our moral ſentiments, cannot deceive

T deceive us ſo groſsly, nor depart ſo very far from all reſemblance to the truth. When a traveller gives an account of ſome diſtant country, he may impoſe upon our credulity the moſt groundleſs and abſurd fictions as the moſt certain matters of fact. But when a perſon pretends to inform us of what paſſes in our neighbourhood, and of the affairs of the very pariſh which we live in, though here too, if we are ſo careleſs as not to examine things with our own eyes, he may deceive us in many reſpects, yet the greateſt falſehoods which he impoſes upon us muſt bear ſome reſemblance to the truth, and muſt even have a conſiderable mixture of truth in them. An author who treats of natural philoſophy, and pretends to aſſign the cauſes of the great phænomena of the univerſe, pretends to give an account of the affairs of a very diſtant country, concerning which he may tell us what he pleaſes, and as long as his narration keeps within the bounds of ſeeming poſſibility, he need not deſpair of gaining our belief. But when he propoſes to explain the origin of our deſires and affections, of our ſentiments of approbation and diſapprobation, he pretends to give an account, not only of the affairs of the very pariſh that we live in, but of our own domeſtic concerns. Though here too, like indolent maſters who put their truſt in a ſteward who deceives them, we are very liable to be impoſed upon, yet we are incapable of paſſing any account which does not preſerve ſome little regard to the truth. Some of the articles, at leaſt, muſt be juſt, and even

even thoſe which are moſt overcharged muſt have had ſome foundation, otherwiſe the fraud would be detected even by that careleſs inſpection which we are diſpoſed to give. The author who ſhould aſſign, as the cauſe of any natural ſentiment, ſome principle which neither had any connexion with it, nor reſembled any other principle which had ſome ſuch connexion, would appear abſurd and ridiculous to the moſt injudicious and unexperienced reader.

SEC-

T

SECTION III.

OF THE DIFFERENT SYSTEMS WHICH HAVE BEEN FORMED CONCERNING THE PRINCIPLE OF APPROBATION.

INTRODUCTION.

AFTER the inquiry concerning the nature of virtue, the next queſtion of importance in Moral Philoſophy, is concerning the principle of approbation, concerning the power or faculty of the mind which renders certain characters agreeable or diſagreeable to us, makes us prefer one tenour of conduct to another, denominate the one right and the other wrong, and conſider the one as the object of approbation, honour, and reward; the other as that of blame, cenſure, and puniſhment.

Three different accounts have been given of this principle of approbation. According to ſome, we approve and diſapprove both of our own actions and of thoſe of others, from ſelf-love only, or from ſome view of their tendency to our own happineſs or diſadvantage: according to others, reaſon, the ſame faculty by which we diſtinguiſh between truth and falſehood, enables us to diſtinguiſh between what is fit and unfit both in actions and affections: according to others, this diſtinction is altogether the effect of immediate ſentiment and feeling, and ariſes from the ſatisfaction or diſguſt with which the

view of certain actions or affections inſpires us. Self-love, reaſon, and ſentiment, therefore, are the three different ſources which have been aſſigned for the principle of approbation.

Before I proceed to give an account of thoſe different ſyſtems, I muſt obſerve, that the determination of this ſecond queſtion, though of the greateſt importance in ſpeculation, is of none in practice. The queſtion concerning the nature of virtue neceſſarily has ſome influence upon our notions of right and wrong in many particular caſes. That concerning the principle of approbation can poſſibly have no ſuch effect. To examine from what contrivance or mechaniſm within, thoſe different notions or ſentiments ariſe, is a mere matter of philoſophical curioſity.

CHAP. I.

Of thoſe Syſtems which deduce the Principle of Approbation from Self-love.

THOSE who account for the principle of approbation from ſelf-love, do not all account for it in the ſame manner, and there is a good deal of confuſion and inaccuracy in all their different ſyſtems. According to Mr. Hobbes, and many of his followers*, man is

* Puffendorff, Mandeville.

driven

PART VII.

driven to take refuge in ſociety, not by any natural love which he bears to his own kind, but becauſe without the aſſiſtance of others he is incapable of ſubſiſting with eaſe or ſafety. Society, upon this account, becomes neceſſary to him, and whatever tends to its ſupport and welfare, he conſiders as having a remote tendency to his own intereſt; and, on the contrary, whatever is likely to diſturb or deſtroy it, he regards as in ſome meaſure hurtful or pernicious to himſelf. Virtue is the great ſupport, and vice the great diſturber of human ſociety. The former, therefore, is agreeable, and the latter offenſive to every man; as from the one he foreſees the proſperity, and from the other the ruin and diſorder of what is ſo neceſſary for the comfort and ſecurity of his exiſtence.

That the tendency of virtue to promote, and of vice to diſturb the order of ſociety, when we conſider it coolly and philoſophically, reflects a very great beauty upon the one, and a very great deformity upon the other, cannot, as I have obſerved upon a former occaſion, be called in queſtion. Human ſociety, when we contemplate it in a certain abſtract and philoſophical light, appears like a great, an immenſe machine, whoſe regular and harmonious movements produce a thouſand agreeable effects. As in any other beautiful and noble machine that was the production of human art, whatever tended to render its movements more ſmooth and eaſy, would derive a beauty from this effect, and, on the contrary, whatever tended to obſtruct them would

would displeaſe upon that account: ſo virtue, which is, as it were, the fine poliſh to the wheels of ſociety, neceſſarily pleaſes; while vice, like the vile ruſt, which makes them jar and grate upon one another, is as neceſſarily offenſive. This account, therefore, of the origin of approbation and diſapprobation, ſo far as it derives them from a regard to the order of ſociety, runs into that principle which gives beauty to utility, and which I have explained upon a former occaſion; and it is from thence that this ſyſtem derives all that appearance of probability which it poſſeſſes. When thoſe authors deſcribe the innumerable advantages of a cultivated and ſocial, above a ſavage and ſolitary life; when they expatiate upon the neceſſity of virtue and good order for the maintenance of the one, and demonſtrate how infallibly the prevalence of vice and diſobedience to the laws tend to bring back the other, the reader is charmed with the novelty and grandeur of thoſe views which they open to him: he ſees plainly a new beauty in virtue, and a new deformity in vice, which he had never taken notice of before, and is commonly ſo delighted with the diſcovery, that he ſeldom takes time to reflect, that this political view having never occurred to him in his life before, cannot poſſibly be the ground of that approbation and diſapprobation with which he has always been accuſtomed to conſider thoſe different qualities.

When thoſe authors, on the other hand, deduce from ſelf-love the intereſt which we take in the welfare of ſociety, and the eſteem which upon

T that account we beſtow upon virtue, they do not mean, that when we in this age applaud the virtue of Cato, and deteſt the villany of Catiline, our ſentiments are influenced by the notion of any benefit we receive from the one, or of any detriment we ſuffer from the other. It was not becauſe the proſperity or ſubverſion of ſociety, in thoſe remote ages and nations, was apprehended to have any influence upon our happineſs or miſery in the preſent times; that according to thoſe philoſophers, we eſteemed the virtuous, and blamed the diſorderly character. They never imagined that our ſentiments were influenced by any benefit or damage which we ſuppoſed actually to redound to us, from either; but by that which might have redounded to us, had we lived in thoſe diſtant ages and countries; or by that which might ſtill redound to us, if in our own times we ſhould meet with characters of the ſame kind. The idea, in ſhort, which thoſe authors were groping about, but which they were never able to unfold diſtinctly, was that indirect ſympathy which we feel with the gratitude or reſentment of thoſe who received the benefit or ſuffered the damage reſulting from ſuch oppoſite characters: and it was this which they were indiſtinctly pointing at, when they ſaid, that it was not the thought of what we had gained or ſuffered which prompted our applauſe or indignation, but the conception or imagination of what we might gain or ſuffer if we were to act in ſociety with ſuch aſſociates.

Sympathy, however, cannot, in any ſenſe, be regarded as a ſelfiſh principle. When I ſympathize

thize with your ſorrow or your indignation, it may be pretended, indeed, that my emotion is founded in ſelf-love, becauſe it ariſes from bringing your caſe home to myſelf, from putting myſelf in your ſituation, and thence conceiving what I ſhould feel in the like circumſtances. But though ſympathy is very properly ſaid to ariſe from an imaginary change of ſituations with the perſon principally concerned, yet this imaginary change is not ſuppoſed to happen to me in my own perſon and character, but in that of the perſon with whom I ſympathize. When I condole with you for the loſs of your only ſon, in order to enter into your grief I do not conſider what I, a perſon of ſuch a character and profeſſion, ſhould ſuffer, if I had a ſon, and if that ſon was unfortunately to die: but I conſider what I ſhould ſuffer if I was really you, and I not only change circumſtances with you, but I change perſons and characters. My grief, therefore, is entirely upon your account, and not in the leaſt upon my own. It is not, therefore, in the leaſt ſelfiſh. How can that be regarded as a ſelfiſh paſſion, which does not ariſe even from the imagination of any thing that has befallen, or that relates to myſelf, in my own proper perſon and character, but which is entirely occupied about what relates to you? A man may ſympathize with a woman in child-bed; though it is impoſſible that he ſhould conceive himſelf as ſuffering her pains in his own proper perſon and character. That whole account of human na-

ture, however, which deduces all ſentiments and affections from ſelf-love, which has made ſo much noiſe in the world, but which, ſo far as I know, has never yet been fully and diſtinctly explained, ſeems to me to have ariſen from ſome confuſed miſapprehenſion of the ſyſtem of ſympathy.

CHAP. II.

Of thoſe Syſtems which make Reaſon the Principle of Approbation.

IT is well known to have been the doctrine of Mr. Hobbes, that a ſtate of nature is a ſtate of war; and that antecedent to the inſtitution of civil government, there could be no ſafe or peaceable ſociety among men. To preſerve ſociety, therefore, according to him, was to ſupport civil government, and to deſtroy civil government was the ſame thing as to put an end to ſociety. But the exiſtence of civil government depends upon the obedience that is paid to the ſupreme magiſtrate. The moment he loſes his authority, all government is at an end. As ſelf-preſervation, therefore, teaches men to applaud whatever tends to promote the welfare of ſociety, and to blame whatever is likely to hurt it; ſo the ſame principle, if they would think and ſpeak conſiſtently, ought to teach them to applaud upon all occaſions obedi-

obedience to the civil magiſtrate, and to blame all diſobedience and rebellion. The very ideas of laudable and blamable, ought to be the ſame with thoſe of obedience and diſobedience. The laws of the civil magiſtrate, therefore, ought to be regarded as the ſole ultimate ſtandards of what was juſt and unjuſt, of what was right and wrong.

It was the avowed intention of Mr. Hobbes, by propagating theſe notions, to ſubject the conſciences of men immediately to the civil, and not to the eccleſiaſtical powers, whoſe turbulence and ambition, he had been taught, by the example of his own times, to regard as the principal ſource of the diſorders of ſociety. His doctrine, upon this account, was peculiarly offenſive to theologians, who accordingly did not fail to vent their indignation againſt him with great aſperity and bitterneſs. It was likewiſe offenſive to all ſound moraliſts, as it ſuppoſed that there was no natural diſtinction between right and wrong, that theſe were mutable and changeable, and depended upon the mere arbitrary will of the civil magiſtrate. This account of things, therefore, was attacked from all quarters, and by all ſorts of weapons, by ſober reaſon as well as by furious declamation.

In order to confute ſo odious a doctrine, it was neceſſary to prove, that antecedent to all law or poſitive inſtitution, the mind was naturally endowed with a faculty, by which it diſtinguiſhed in certain actions and affections, the

T qualities of right, laudable, and virtuous, and in others thoſe of wrong, blamable, and vicious.

Law, it was juſtly obſerved by Dr. Cudworth *, could not be the original ſource of thoſe diſtinctions; ſince upon the ſuppoſition of ſuch a law, it muſt either be right to obey it, and wrong to diſobey it, or indifferent whether we obeyed it, or diſobeyed it. That law which it was indifferent whether we obeyed or diſobeyed, could not, it was evident, be the ſource of thoſe diſtinctions; neither could that which it was right to obey and wrong to diſobey, ſince even this ſtill ſuppoſed the antecedent notions or ideas of right and wrong, and that obedience to the law was conformable to the idea of right, and diſobedience to that of wrong.

Since the mind, therefore, had a notion of thoſe diſtinctions antecedent to all law, it ſeemed neceſſarily to follow, that it derived this notion from reaſon, which pointed out the difference between right and wrong, in the ſame manner in which it did that between truth and falſehood: and this concluſion, which, though true in ſome reſpects, is rather haſty in others, was more eaſily received at a time when the abſtract ſcience of human nature was but in its infancy, and before the diſtinct offices and powers of the different faculties of the human mind had been carefully examined and diſtinguiſhed from one another. When this controverſy with

* Immutable Morality, l. 1.

M-

Mr. Hobbes was carried on with the greateſt warmth and keenneſs, no other faculty had been thought of from which any ſuch ideas could poſſibly be ſuppoſed to ariſe. It became at this time, therefore, the popular doctrine, that the eſſence of virtue and vice did not conſiſt in the conformity or diſagreement of human actions with the law of a ſuperior, but in their conformity or diſagreement with reaſon, which was thus conſidered as the original ſource and principle of approbation and diſapprobation.

That virtue conſiſts in conformity to reaſon, is true in ſome reſpects, and this faculty may very juſtly be conſidered as, in ſome ſenſe, the ſource and principle of approbation and diſapprobation, and of all ſolid judgments concerning right and wrong. It is by reaſon that we diſcover thoſe general rules of juſtice by which we ought to regulate our actions: and it is by the ſame faculty that we form thoſe more vague and indeterminate ideas of what is prudent, of what is decent, of what is generous or noble, which we carry conſtantly about with us, and according to which we endeavour, as well as we can, to model the tenor of our conduct. The general maxims of morality are formed, like all other general maxims, from experience and induction. We obſerve in a great variety of particular caſes what pleaſes or diſpleaſes our moral faculties, what theſe approve or diſapprove of, and, by induction from this experience, we eſtabliſh thoſe general rules.

PART VII. But induction is always regarded as one of the operations of reason. From reason, therefore, we are very properly said to derive all those general maxims and ideas. It is by these, however, that we regulate the greater part of our moral judgments, which would be extremely uncertain and precarious if they depended altogether upon what is liable to so many variations as immediate sentiment and feeling, which the different states of health and humour are capable of altering so essentially. As our most solid judgments, therefore, with regard to right and wrong, are regulated by maxims and ideas derived from an induction of reason, virtue may very properly be said to consist in a conformity to reason, and so far this faculty may be considered as the source and principle of approbation and disapprobation.

But though reason is undoubtedly the source of the general rules of morality, and of all the moral judgments which we form by means of them; it is altogether absurd and unintelligible to suppose that the first perceptions of right and wrong can be derived from reason, even in those particular cases upon the experience of which the general rules are formed. These first perceptions, as well as all other experiments upon which any general rules are founded, cannot be the object of reason, but of immediate sense and feeling. It is by finding in a vast variety of instances that one tenor of conduct constantly pleases in a certain manner, and that

that another as conſtantly diſpleaſes the mind, that we form the general rules of morality. But reaſon cannot render any particular object either agreeable or diſagreeable to the mind for its own ſake. Reaſon may ſhow that this object is the means of obtaining ſome other which is naturally either pleaſing or diſpleaſing, and in this manner may render it either agreeable or diſagreeable for the ſake of ſomething elſe. But nothing can be agreeable or diſagreeable for its own ſake, which is not rendered ſuch by immediate ſenſe and feeling. If virtue, therefore, in every particular inſtance, neceſſarily pleaſes for its own ſake, and if vice as certainly diſpleaſes the mind, it cannot be reaſon, but immediate ſenſe and feeling, which, in this manner, reconciles us to the one, and alienates us from the other.

Pleaſure and pain are the great objects of deſire and averſion: but theſe are diſtinguiſhed not by reaſon, but by immediate ſenſe and feeling. If virtue, therefore, be deſirable for its own ſake, and if vice be, in the ſame manner, the object of averſion, it cannot be reaſon which originally diſtinguiſhes thoſe different qualities, but immediate ſenſe and feeling.

As reaſon, however, in a certain ſenſe, may juſtly be conſidered as the principle of approbation and diſapprobation, theſe ſentiments were, through inattention, long regarded as originally flowing from the operations of this faculty. Dr. Hutcheſon had the merit of being the firſt who diſtinguiſhed with any degree of preciſion

in

PART VII. in what reſpect all moral diſtinctions may be ſaid to ariſe from reaſon, and in what reſpect they are founded upon immediate ſenſe and feeling. In his illuſtrations upon the moral ſenſe he has explained this ſo fully, and, in my opinion, ſo unanſwerably, that, if any controverſy is ſtill kept up about this ſubject, I can impute it to nothing, but either to inattention to what that gentleman has written, or to a ſuperſtitious attachment to certain forms of expreſſion, a weakneſs not very uncommon among the learned, eſpecially in ſubjects ſo deeply intereſting as the preſent, in which a man of virtue is often loath to abandon, even the propriety of a ſingle phraſe which he has been accuſtomed to.

CHAP. III.

Of thoſe Syſtems which make Sentiment the Principle of Approbation.

THOSE ſyſtems which make ſentiment the principle of approbation may be divided into two different claſſes.

I. According to ſome the principle of approbation is founded upon a ſentiment of a peculiar nature, upon a particular power of perception exerted by the mind at the view of certain actions or affections; ſome of which affecting this faculty in an agreeable and others in a

disagreeable manner, the former are stamped with the characters of right, laudable, and virtuous; the latter with those of wrong, blamable, and vicious. This sentiment being of a peculiar nature distinct from every other, and the effect of a particular power of perception, they give it a particular name, and call it a moral sense.

II. According to others, in order to account for the principle of approbation, there is no occasion for supposing any new power of perception which had never been heard of before: Nature, they imagine, acts here, as in all other cases, with the strictest œconomy, and produces a multitude of effects from one and the same cause; and sympathy, a power which has always been taken notice of, and with which the mind is manifestly endowed, is, they think, sufficient to account for all the effects ascribed to this peculiar faculty.

I. Dr. Hutcheson * had been at great pains to prove that the principle of approbation was not founded on self-love. He had demonstrated too that it could not arise from any operation of reason. Nothing remained, he thought, but to suppose it a faculty of a peculiar kind, with which Nature had endowed the human mind, in order to produce this one particular and important effect. When self-love and reason were both excluded, it did not occur to him

* Inquiry concerning Virtue.

that

PART VII.

that there was any other known faculty of the mind which could in any respect answer this purpose.

This new power of perception he called a moral sense, and supposed it to be somewhat analogous to the external senses. As the bodies around us, by affecting these in a certain manner, appear to possess the different qualities of sound, taste, odour, colour; so the various affections of the human mind, by touching this particular faculty in a certain manner, appear to possess the different qualities of amiable and odious, of virtuous and vicious, of right and wrong.

The various senses or powers of perception *, from which the human mind derives all its simple ideas, were, according to this system, of two different kinds, of which the one were called the direct or antecedent, the other, the reflex or consequent senses. The direct senses were those faculties from which the mind derived the perception of such species of things as did not presuppose the antecedent perception of any other. Thus sounds and colours were objects of the direct senses. To hear a sound or to see a colour does not presuppose the antecedent perception of any other quality or object. The reflex or consequent senses, on the other hand, were those faculties from which the mind derived the perception of such species of things

* Treatise of the Passions.

as

as preſuppoſed the antecedent perception of ſome other. Thus harmony and beauty were objects of the reflex ſenſes. In order to perceive the harmony of a ſound, or the beauty of a colour, we muſt firſt perceive the ſound or the colour. The moral ſenſe was conſidered as a faculty of this kind. That faculty, which Mr. Locke calls reflection, and from which he derived the ſimple ideas of the different paſſions and emotions of the human mind, was, according to Dr. Hutcheſon, a direct internal ſenſe. That faculty again by which we perceived the beauty or deformity, the virtue or vice of thoſe different paſſions and emotions, was a reflex, internal ſenſe.

Dr. Hutcheſon endeavoured ſtill further to ſupport this doctrine, by ſhewing that it was agreeable to the analogy of nature, and that the mind was endowed with a variety of other reflex ſenſes exactly ſimilar to the moral ſenſe; ſuch as a ſenſe of beauty and deformity in external objects; a public ſenſe, by which we ſympathize with the happineſs or miſery of our fellow-creatures; a ſenſe of ſhame and honour, and a ſenſe of ridicule.

But notwithſtanding all the pains which this ingenious philoſopher has taken to prove that the principle of approbation is founded in a peculiar power of perception, ſomewhat analogous to the external ſenſes, there are ſome conſequences, which he acknowledges to follow from this doctrine, that will, perhaps, be regarded by many as a ſufficient confutation of it.

The qualities, he allows *, which belong to the objects of any ſenſe, cannot, without the greateſt abſurdity, be aſcribed to the ſenſe itſelf. Who ever thought of calling the ſenſe of ſeeing black or white, the ſenſe of hearing loud or low, or the ſenſe of taſting ſweet or bitter? And, according to him, it is equally abſurd to call our moral faculties virtuous or vicious, morally good or evil. Theſe qualities belong to the objects of thoſe faculties, not to the faculties themſelves. If any man, therefore, was ſo abſurdly conſtituted as to approve of cruelty and injuſtice as the higheſt virtues, and to diſapprove of equity and humanity as the moſt pitiful vices, ſuch a conſtitution of mind might indeed be regarded as inconvenient both to the individual and to the ſociety, and likewiſe as ſtrange, ſurpriſing, and unnatural in itſelf; but it could not, without the greateſt abſurdity, be denominated vicious or morally evil.

Yet ſurely if we ſaw any man ſhouting with admiration and applauſe at a barbarous and unmerited execution, which ſome inſolent tyrant had ordered, we ſhould not think we were guilty of any great abſurdity in denominating this behaviour vicious and morally evil in the higheſt degree, though it expreſſed nothing but depraved moral faculties, or an abſurd approbation of this horrid action, as of what was noble, magnanimous, and great. Our heart, I imagine, at

* Illuſtrations upon the Moral Senſe, ſect. 1. p. 237, et ſeq.; third edition.

the ſight of ſuch a ſpectator, would forget for a while its ſympathy with the ſufferer, and feel nothing but horror and deteſtation, at the thought of ſo execrable a wretch. We ſhould abominate him even more than the tyrant who might be goaded on by the ſtrong paſſions of jealouſy, fear, and reſentment, and upon that account be more excuſable. But the ſentiments of the ſpectator would appear altogether without cauſe or motive, and therefore moſt perfectly and completely deteſtable. There is no perverſion of ſentiment or affection which our heart would be more averſe to enter into, or which it would reject with greater hatred and indignation than one of this kind; and ſo far from regarding ſuch a conſtitution of mind as being merely ſomething ſtrange or inconvenient, and not in any reſpect vicious or morally evil, we ſhould rather conſider it as the very laſt and moſt dreadful ſtage of moral depravity.

Correct moral ſentiments, on the contrary, naturally appear in ſome degree laudable and morally good. The man, whoſe cenſure and applauſe are upon all occaſions ſuited with the greateſt accuracy to the value or unworthineſs of the object, ſeems to deſerve a degree even of moral approbation. We admire the delicate preciſion of his moral ſentiments: they lead our own judgments, and, upon account of their uncommon and ſurpriſing juſtneſs, they even excite our wonder and applauſe. We cannot indeed be always ſure that the conduct of ſuch a perſon would be in any reſpect correſpondent to the

preciſion

PART VII.

precision and accuracy of his judgments concerning the conduct of others. Virtue requires habit and resolution of mind, as well as delicacy of sentiment; and unfortunately the former qualities are sometimes wanting, where the latter is in the greatest perfection. This disposition of mind, however, though it may sometimes be attended with imperfections, is incompatible with any thing that is grosly criminal, and is the happiest foundation upon which the superstructure of perfect virtue can be built. There are many men who mean very well, and seriously purpose to do what they think their duty, who notwithstanding are disagreeable on account of the coarseness of their moral sentiments.

It may be said, perhaps, that though the principle of approbation is not founded upon any power of perception that is in any respect analogous to the external senses, it may still be founded upon a peculiar sentiment which answers this one particular purpose and no other. Approbation and disapprobation, it may be pretended, are certain feelings or emotions which arise in the mind upon the view of different characters and actions; and as resentment might be called a sense of injuries, or gratitude a sense of benefits, so these may very properly receive the name of a sense of right and wrong, or of a moral sense.

But this account of things, though it may not be liable to the same objections with the foregoing, is exposed to others which are equally unanswerable.

First

SECT. III.

First of all, whatever variations any particular emotion may undergo, it still preserves the general features which distinguish it to be an emotion of such a kind, and these general features are always more striking and remarkable than any variation which it may undergo in particular cases. Thus anger is an emotion of a particular kind: and accordingly its general features are always more distinguishable than all the variations it undergoes in particular cases. Anger against a man is, no doubt, somewhat different from anger against a woman, and that again from anger against a child. In each of those three cases, the general passion of anger receives a different modification from the particular character of its object, as may easily be observed by the attentive. But still the general features of the passion predominate in all these cases. To distinguish these, requires no nice observation: a very delicate attention, on the contrary, is necessary to discover their variations: every body takes notice of the former; scarce any body observes the latter. If approbation and disapprobation, therefore, were, like gratitude and resentment, emotions of a particular kind, distinct from every other, we should expect that in all the variations which either of them might undergo, it would still retain the general features which mark it to be an emotion of such a particular kind, clear, plain, and easily distinguishable. But in fact it happens quite otherwise. If we attend to what we really feel

PART VII. when upon different occasions we either approve or disapprove, we shall find that our emotion in one case is often totally different from that in another, and that no common features can possibly be discovered between them. Thus the approbation with which we view a tender, delicate, and humane sentiment, is quite different from that with which we are struck by one that appears great, daring, and magnanimous. Our approbation of both may, upon different occasions, be perfect and entire; but we are softened by the one, and we are elevated by the other, and there is no sort of resemblance between the emotions which they excite in us. But, according to that system which I have been endeavouring to establish, this must necessarily be the case. As the emotions of the person whom we approve of, are, in those two cases, quite opposite to one another, and as our approbation arises from sympathy with those opposite emotions, what we feel upon the one occasion, can have no sort of resemblance to what we feel upon the other. But this could not happen if approbation consisted in a peculiar emotion which had nothing in common with the sentiments we approved of, but which arose at the view of those sentiments, like any other passion at the view of its proper object. The same thing holds true with regard to disapprobation. Our horror for cruelty has no sort of resemblance to our contempt for mean-spiritedness. It is quite a different species of discord which we feel at the view

view of thoſe two different vices, between our own minds and thoſe of the perſon whoſe ſentiments and behaviour we conſider.

Secondly, I have already obſerved, that not only the different paſſions or affections of the human mind which are approved or diſapproved of, appear morally good or evil, but that proper and improper approbation appear, to our natural ſentiments, to be ſtamped with the ſame characters. I would aſk, therefore, how it is, that, according to this ſyſtem, we approve or diſapprove of proper or improper approbation? To this queſtion there is, I imagine, but one reaſonable anſwer, which can poſſibly be given. It muſt be ſaid, that when the approbation with which our neighbour regards the conduct of a third perſon coincides with our own, we approve of his approbation, and conſider it as, in ſome meaſure, morally good; and that, on the contrary, when it does not coincide with our own ſentiments, we diſapprove of it, and conſider it as, in ſome meaſure, morally evil. It muſt be allowed, therefore, that, at leaſt in this one caſe, the coincidence or oppoſition of ſentiments, between the obſerver and the perſon obſerved, conſtitutes moral approbation or diſapprobation. And if it does ſo in this one caſe, I would aſk, why not in every other? to what purpoſe imagine a new power of perception in order to account for thoſe ſentiments?

Againſt every account of the principle of approbation, which makes it depend upon a peculiar ſentiment, diſtinct from every other, I

PART VII. would object; that it is ſtrange that this ſentiment, which Providence undoubtedly intended to be the governing principle of human nature, ſhould hitherto have been ſo little taken notice of, as not to have got a name in any language. The word Moral Senſe is of very late formation, and cannot yet be conſidered as making part of the Engliſh tongue. The word Approbation has but within theſe few years been appropriated to denote peculiarly any thing of this kind. In propriety of language we approve of whatever is entirely to our ſatisfaction, of the form of a building, of the contrivance of a machine, of the flavour of a diſh of meat. The word Conſcience does not immediately denote any moral faculty by which we approve or diſapprove. Conſcience ſuppoſes, indeed, the exiſtence of ſome ſuch faculty, and properly ſignifies our conſciouſneſs of having acted agreeably or contrary to its directions. When love, hatred, joy, ſorrow, gratitude, reſentment, with ſo many other paſſions which are all ſuppoſed to be the ſubjects of this principle, have made themſelves conſiderable enough to get titles to know them by, is it not ſurpriſing that the ſovereign of them all ſhould hitherto have been ſo little heeded, that, a few philoſophers excepted, nobody has yet thought it worth while to beſtow a name upon it.

When we approve of any character or action, the ſentiments which we feel, are, according to the foregoing ſyſtem, derived from four ſources, which are in ſome reſpects different from one another.

another. Firſt, we ſympathize with the motives of the agent; ſecondly, we enter into the gratitude of thoſe who receive the benefit of his actions; thirdly, we obſerve that his conduct has been agreeable to the general rules by which thoſe two ſympathies generally act; and, laſt of all, when we conſider ſuch actions as making a part of a ſyſtem of behaviour which tends to promote the happineſs either of the individual or of the ſociety, they appear to derive a beauty from this utility, not unlike that which we aſcribe to any well-contrived machine. After deducting, in any one particular caſe, all that muſt be acknowledged to proceed from ſome one or other of theſe four principles, I ſhould be glad to know what remains, and I ſhall freely allow this overplus to be aſcribed to a moral ſenſe, or to any other peculiar faculty, provided any body will aſcertain preciſely what this overplus is. It might be expected, perhaps, that if there was any ſuch peculiar principle, ſuch as this moral ſenſe is ſuppoſed to be, we ſhould feel it, in ſome particular caſes, ſeparated and detached from every other, as we often feel joy, ſorrow, hope, and fear, pure and unmixed with any other emotion. This, however, I imagine, cannot even be pretended. I have never heard any inſtance alleged in which this principle could be ſaid to exert itſelf alone and unmixed with ſympathy or antipathy, with gratitude or reſentment, with the perception of the agreement or diſagreement of any action to an eſtabliſhed rule, or laſt of all with that general taſte for beauty and

PART VII. order which is excited by inanimated as well as by animated objects.

II. There is another ſyſtem which attempts to account for the origin of our moral ſentiments from ſympathy, diſtinct from that which I have been endeavouring to eſtabliſh. It is that which places virtue in utility, and accounts for the pleaſure with which the ſpectator ſurveys the utility of any quality from ſympathy with the happineſs of thoſe who are affected by it. This ſympathy is different both from that by which we enter into the motives of the agent, and from that by which we go along with the gratitude of the perſons who are benefited by his actions. It is the ſame principle with that by which we approve of a well contrived machine. But no machine can be the object of either of thoſe two laſt mentioned ſympathies. I have already, in the fourth part of this diſcourſe, given ſome account of this ſyſtem.

SEC-

SECTION IV.

OF THE MANNER IN WHICH DIFFERENT AUTHORS HAVE TREATED OF THE PRACTICAL RULES OF MORALITY.

IT was obſerved in the third part of this diſcourſe, that the rules of juſtice are the only rules of morality which are preciſe and accurate; that thoſe of all the other virtues are looſe, vague, and indeterminate; that the firſt may be compared to the rules of grammar; the others to thoſe which critics lay down for the attainment of what is ſublime and elegant in compoſition, and which preſent us rather with a general idea of the perfection we ought to aim at, than afford us any certain and infallible directions for acquiring it.

As the different rules of morality admit ſuch different degrees of accuracy, thoſe authors who have endeavoured to collect and digeſt them into ſyſtems have done it in two different manners; and one ſet has followed through the whole that looſe method to which they were naturally directed by the conſideration of one ſpecies of virtues; while another has as univerſally endeavoured to introduce into their precepts that ſort of accuracy of which only ſome of them are ſuſceptible. The firſt have wrote like critics, the ſecond like grammarians.

PART VII.

I. The firſt, among whom we may count all the ancient moraliſts, have contented themſelves with deſcribing in a general manner the different vices and virtues, and with pointing out the deformity and miſery of the one diſpoſition as well as the propriety and happineſs of the other, but have not affected to lay down many preciſe rules that are to hold good unexceptionably in all particular caſes. They have only endeavoured to aſcertain, as far as language is capable of aſcertaining, firſt, wherein conſiſts the ſentiment of the heart, upon which each particular virtue is founded, what ſort of internal feeling or emotion it is which conſtitutes the eſſence of friendſhip, of humanity, of generoſity, of juſtice, of magnanimity, and of all the other virtues, as well as of the vices which are oppoſed to them: and, ſecondly, what is the general way of acting, the ordinary tone and tenor of conduct to which each of thoſe ſentiments would direct us, or how it is that a friendly, a generous, a brave, a juſt, and a humane man, would, upon ordinary occaſions, chuſe to act.

To characteriſe the ſentiment of the heart, upon which each particular virtue is founded, though it requires both a delicate and an accurate pencil, is a taſk, however, which may be executed with ſome degree of exactneſs. It is impoſſible, indeed, to expreſs all the variations which each ſentiment either does or ought to undergo, according to every poſſible variation of circumſtances. They are endleſs, and language wants names to mark them by. The ſentiment

timent of friendſhip, for example, which we feel for an old man is different from that which we feel for a young: that which we entertain for an auſtere man different from that which we feel for one of ſofter and gentler manners: and that again from what we feel for one of gay vivacity and ſpirit. The friendſhip which we conceive for a man is different from that with which a woman affects us, even where there is no mixture of any groſſer paſſion. What author could enumerate and aſcertain theſe and all the other infinite varieties which this ſentiment is capable of undergoing? But ſtill the general ſentiment of friendſhip and familiar attachment which is common to them all, may be aſcertained with a ſufficient degree of accuracy. The picture which is drawn of it, though it will always be in many reſpects incomplete, may, however, have ſuch a reſemblance as to make us know the original when we meet with it, and even diſtinguiſh it from other ſentiments to which it has a conſiderable reſemblance, ſuch as good-will, reſpect, eſteem, admiration.

To deſcribe, in a general manner, what is the ordinary way of acting to which each virtue would prompt us, is ſtill more eaſy. It is, indeed, ſcarce poſſible to deſcribe the internal ſentiment or emotion upon which it is founded, without doing ſomething of this kind. It is impoſſible by language to expreſs, if I may ſay ſo, the inviſible features of all the different modifications of paſſion as they ſhow themſelves within. There is no other way of marking and diſtin-

PART VII.

diſtinguiſhing them from one another, but by deſcribing the effects which they produce without, the alterations which they occaſion in the countenance, in the air and external behaviour, the reſolutions they ſuggeſt, the actions they prompt to. It is thus that Cicero, in the firſt book of his Offices, endeavours to direct us to the practice of the four cardinal virtues, and that Ariſtotle in the practical parts of his Ethics, points out to us the different habits by which he would have us regulate our behaviour, ſuch as liberality, magnificence, magnanimity, and even jocularity and good humour, qualities which that indulgent philoſopher has thought worthy of a place in the catalogue of the virtues, though the lightneſs of that approbation which we naturally beſtow upon them, ſhould not ſeem to entitle them to ſo venerable a name.

Such works preſent us with agreeable and lively pictures of manners. By the vivacity of their deſcriptions they inflame our natural love of virtue, and increaſe our abhorrence of vice: by the juſtneſs as well as delicacy of their obſervations they may often help both to correct and to aſcertain our natural ſentiments with regard to the propriety of conduct, and ſuggeſting many nice and delicate attentions, form us to a more exact juſtneſs of behaviour, than what, without ſuch inſtruction, we ſhould have been apt to think of. In treating of the rules of morality, in this manner, conſiſts the ſcience which is properly called Ethics, a ſcience which, though like criticiſm, it does not admit of the

moſt

moſt accurate preciſion, is, however, both highly uſeful and agreeable. It is of all others the moſt ſuſceptible of the embelliſhments of eloquence, and by means of them of beſtowing, if that be poſſible, a new importance upon the ſmalleſt rules of duty. Its precepts, when thus dreſſed and adorned, are capable of producing upon the flexibility of youth, the nobleſt and moſt laſting impreſſions, and as they fall in with the natural magnanimity of that generous age, they are able to inſpire, for a time at leaſt, the moſt heroic reſolutions, and thus tend both to eſtabliſh and confirm the beſt and moſt uſeful habits of which the mind of man is ſuſceptible. Whatever precept and exhortation can do to animate us to the practice of virtue, is done by this ſcience delivered in this manner.

II. The ſecond ſet of moraliſts, among whom we may count all the caſuiſts of the middle and latter ages of the chriſtian church, as well as all thoſe who in this and in the preceding century have treated of what is called natural juriſprudence, do not content themſelves with characterizing in this general manner that tenor of conduct which they would recommend to us, but endeavour to lay down exact and preciſe rules for the direction of every circumſtance of our behaviour. As juſtice is the only virtue with regard to which ſuch exact rules can properly be given; it is this virtue, that has chiefly fallen under the conſideration of thoſe two different ſets of writers. They treat of it, however, in a very different manner.

Thoſe

PART VII.

Thoſe who write upon the principles of juriſprudence, conſider only what the perſon to whom the obligation is due, ought to think himſelf entitled to exact by force; what every impartial ſpectator would approve of him for exacting, or what a judge or arbiter, to whom he had ſubmitted his caſe, and who had undertaken to do him juſtice, ought to oblige the other perſon to ſuffer or to perform. The caſuiſts, on the other hand, do not ſo much examine what it is, that might properly be exacted by force, as what it is, that the perſon who owes the obligation ought to think himſelf bound to perform from the moſt ſacred and ſcrupulous regard to the general rules of juſtice, and from the moſt conſcientious dread, either of wronging his neighbour, or of violating the integrity of his own character. It is the end of juriſprudence to preſcribe rules for the deciſions of judges and arbiters. It is the end of caſuiſtry to preſcribe rules for the conduct of a good man. By obſerving all the rules of juriſprudence, ſuppoſing them ever ſo perfect, we ſhould deſerve nothing but to be free from external puniſhment. By obſerving thoſe of caſuiſtry, ſuppoſing them ſuch as they ought to be, we ſhould be entitled to conſiderable praiſe by the exact and ſcrupulous delicacy of our behaviour.

It may frequently happen that a good man ought to think himſelf bound, from a ſacred and conſcientious regard to the general rules of juſtice, to perform many things which it would be the higheſt injuſtice to extort from him, or for

for any judge or arbiter to impoſe upon him by force. To give a trite example; a highwayman, by the fear of death, obliges a traveller to promiſe him a certain ſum money. Whether ſuch a promiſe, extorted in this manner by unjuſt force, ought to be regarded as obligatory, is a queſtion that has been very much debated.

If we conſider it merely as a queſtion of juriſprudence, the deciſion can admit of no doubt. It would be abſurd to ſuppoſe that the highwayman can be entitled to uſe force to conſtrain the other to perform. To extort the promiſe was a crime which deſerved the higheſt puniſhment, and to extort the performance would only be adding a new crime to the former. He can complain of no injury who has been only deceived by the perſon by whom he might juſtly have been killed. To ſuppoſe that a judge ought to enforce the obligation of ſuch promiſes, or that the magiſtrate ought to allow them to ſuſtain action at law, would be the moſt ridiculous of all abſurdities. If we conſider this queſtion, therefore, as a queſtion of juriſprudence, we can be at no loſs about the deciſion.

But if we conſider it as a queſtion of caſuiſtry, it will not be ſo eaſily determined. Whether a good man, from a conſcientious regard to that moſt ſacred rule of juſtice, which commands the obſervance of all ſerious promiſes, would not think himſelf bound to perform, is at leaſt much more doubtful. That no regard is due to the diſappointment of the wretch who brings him into this ſituation, that no injury is done to the robber, and conſequently that nothing can be extorted

T extorted by force, will admit of no ſort of diſpute. But whether ſome regard is not, in this caſe, due to his own dignity and honour, to the inviolable ſacredneſs of that part of his character which makes him reverence the law of truth and abhor every thing that approaches to treachery and falſehood, may, perhaps, more reaſonably be made a queſtion. The caſuiſts accordingly are greatly divided about it. One party, with whom we may count Cicero among the ancients, among the moderns, Puffendorf, Barbeyrac his commentator, and above all the late Dr. Hutcheſon, one who in moſt caſes was by no means a looſe caſuiſt, determine, without any heſitation, that no ſort of regard is due to any ſuch promiſe, and that to think otherwiſe is mere weakneſs and ſuperſtition. Another party, among whom we may reckon * ſome of the ancient fathers of the church, as well as ſome very eminent modern caſuiſts, have been of another opinion, and have judged all ſuch promiſes obligatory.

If we conſider the matter according to the common ſentiments of mankind, we ſhall find that ſome regard would be thought due even to a promiſe of this kind; but that it is impoſſible to determine how much, by any general rule that will apply to all caſes without exception. The man who was quite frank and eaſy in making promiſes of this kind, and who violated them with as little ceremony, we ſhould not chuſe for our friend and companion. A gen-

* St. Auguſtine, La Placette.

tleman

tleman who ſhould promiſe a highwayman five pounds and not perform, would incur ſome blame. If the ſum promiſed, however, was very great, it might be more doubtful, what was proper to be done. If it was ſuch, for example, that the payment of it would entirely ruin the family of the promiſer, if it was ſo great as to be ſufficient for promoting the moſt uſeful purpoſes, it would appear in ſome meaſure criminal, at leaſt extremely improper, to throw it for the ſake of a punctilio, into ſuch worthleſs hands. The man who ſhould beggar himſelf, or who ſhould throw away an hundred thouſand pounds, though he could afford that vaſt ſum, for the ſake of obſerving ſuch a parole with a thief, would appear to the common ſenſe of mankind, abſurd and extravagant in the higheſt degree. Such profuſion would ſeem inconſiſtent with his duty, with what he owed both to himſelf and others, and what, therefore, regard to a promiſe extorted in this manner, could by no means authoriſe. To fix, however, by any preciſe rule, what degree of regard ought to be paid to it, or what might be the greateſt ſum which could be due from it, is evidently impoſſible. This would vary according to the characters of the perſons, according to their circumſtances, according to the ſolemnity of the promiſe, and even according to the incidents of the rencounter: and if the promiſer had been treated with a great deal of that ſort of gallantry, which is ſometimes to be met with in perſons of the moſt abandoned characters, more would ſeem due than upon

PART VII.

other occaſions. It may be ſaid in general, that exact propriety requires the obſervance of all ſuch promiſes, wherever it is not inconſiſtent with ſome other duties that are more ſacred; ſuch as regard to the public intereſt, to thoſe whom gratitude, whom natural affection, or whom the laws of proper beneficence ſhould prompt us to provide for. But, as was formerly taken notice of, we have no preciſe rules to determine what external actions are due from a regard to ſuch motives, nor, conſequently, when it is that thoſe virtues are inconſiſtent with the obſervance of ſuch promiſes.

It is to be obſerved, however, that whenever ſuch promiſes are violated, though for the moſt neceſſary reaſons, it is always with ſome degree of diſhonour to the perſon who made them. After they are made, we may be convinced of the impropriety of obſerving them. But ſtill there is ſome fault in having made them. It is at leaſt a departure from the higheſt and nobleſt maxims of magnanimity and honour. A brave man ought to die, rather than make a promiſe which he can neither keep without folly, nor violate without ignominy. For ſome degree of ignominy always attends a ſituation of this kind. Treachery and falſehood are vices ſo dangerous, ſo dreadful, and, at the ſame time, ſuch as may ſo eaſily, and, upon many occaſions, ſo ſafely be indulged, that we are more jealous of them than of almoſt any other. Our imagination therefore attaches the idea of ſhame to all violations of faith, in every circumſtance and

in every ſituation. They reſemble, in this reſpect, the violations of chaſtity in the fair ſex, a virtue of which, for the like reaſons, we are exceſſively jealous; and our ſentiments are not more delicate with regard to the one, than with regard to the other. Breach of chaſtity diſhonours irretrievably. No circumſtances, no ſolicitation can excuſe it; no ſorrow, no repentance atone for it. We are ſo nice in this reſpect that even a rape diſhonours, and the innocence of the mind cannot, in our imagination, waſh out the pollution of the body. It is the ſame caſe with the violation of faith, when it has been ſolemnly pledged, even to the moſt worthleſs of mankind. Fidelity is ſo neceſſary a virtue, that we apprehend it in general to be due even to thoſe to whom nothing elſe is due, and whom we think it lawful to kill and deſtroy. It is to no purpoſe that the perſon who has been guilty of the breach of it, urges that he promiſed in order to ſave his life, and that he broke his promiſe becauſe it was inconſiſtent with ſome other reſpectable duty to keep it. Theſe circumſtances may alleviate, but cannot entirely wipe out his diſhonour. He appears to have been guilty of an action with which, in the imaginations of men, ſome degree of ſhame is inſeparably connected. He has broke a promiſe which he had ſolemnly averred he would maintain; and his character, if not irretrievably ſtained and polluted, has at leaſt a ridicule affixed to it, which it will be very difficult entirely to efface; and no man, I imagine, who

PART VII. had gone through an adventure of this kind would be fond of telling the ſtory.

This inſtance may ſerve to ſhow wherein conſiſts the difference between caſuiſtry and juriſprudence, even when both of them conſider the obligations of the general rules of juſtice.

But though this difference be real and eſſential, though thoſe two ſciences propoſe quite different ends, the ſameneſs of the ſubject has made ſuch a ſimilarity between them, that the greater part of authors whoſe profeſſed deſign was to treat of juriſprudence, have determined the different queſtions they examine, ſometimes according to the principles of that ſcience, and ſometimes according to thoſe of caſuiſtry, without diſtinguiſhing, and, perhaps, without being themſelves aware when they did the one, and when the other.

The doctrine of the caſuiſts, however, is by no means confined to the conſideration of what a conſcientious regard to the general rules of juſtice would demand of us. It embraces many other parts of Chriſtian and moral duty. What ſeems principally to have given occaſion to the cultivation of this ſpecies of ſcience was the cuſtom of auricular confeſſion, introduced by the Roman Catholic ſuperſtition, in times of barbariſm and ignorance. By that inſtitution, the moſt ſecret actions, and even the thoughts of every perſon, which could be ſuſpected of receding in the ſmalleſt degree from the rules of Chriſtian purity, were to be revealed to the confeſſor. The confeſſor informed his penitents

 whether,

whether, and in what reſpect they had violated their duty, and what penance it behoved them to undergo, before he could abſolve them in the name of the offended Deity.

The conſciouſneſs, or even the ſuſpicion of having done wrong, is a load upon every mind, and is accompanied with anxiety and terror in all thoſe who are not hardened by long habits of iniquity. Men, in this, as in all other diſtreſſes, are naturally eager to diſburthen themſelves of the oppreſſion which they feel upon their thoughts, by unboſoming the agony of their mind to ſome perſon whoſe ſecrecy and diſcretion they can confide in. The ſhame, which they ſuffer from this acknowledgment, is fully compenſated by that alleviation of their uneaſineſs which the ſympathy of their confident ſeldom fails to occaſion. It relieves them to find that they are not altogether unworthy of regard, and that however their paſt conduct may be cenſured, their preſent diſpoſition is at leaſt approved of, and is perhaps ſufficient to compenſate the other, at leaſt to maintain them in ſome degree of eſteem with their friend. A numerous and artful clergy had, in thoſe times of ſuperſtition, inſinuated themſelves into the confidence of almoſt every private family. They poſſeſſed all the little learning which the times could afford, and their manners, though in many reſpects rude and diſorderly, were poliſhed and regular compared with thoſe of the age they lived in. They were regarded, therefore, not only as the great directors of all religious, but

PART VII. of all moral duties. Their familiarity gave reputation to whoever was ſo happy as to poſſeſs it, and every mark of their diſapprobation ſtamped the deepeſt ignominy upon all who had the misfortune to fall under it. Being conſidered as the great judges of right and wrong, they were naturally conſulted about all ſcruples that occurred, and it was reputable for any perſon to have it known that he made thoſe holy men the confidents of all ſuch ſecrets, and took no important or delicate ſtep in his conduct without their advice and approbation. It was not difficult for the clergy, therefore, to get it eſtabliſhed as a general rule, that they ſhould be entruſted with what it had already become faſhionable to entruſt them, and with what they generally would have been entruſted, though no ſuch rule had been eſtabliſhed. To qualify themſelves for confeſſors became thus a neceſſary part of the ſtudy of churchmen and divines, and they were thence led to collect what are called caſes of conſcience, nice and delicate ſituations in which it is hard to determine whereabouts the propriety of conduct may lie. Such works, they imagined, might be of uſe both to the directors of conſciences and to thoſe who were to be directed; and hence the origin of books of caſuiſtry.

The moral duties which fell under the conſideration of the caſuiſts were chiefly thoſe which can, in ſome meaſure at leaſt, be circumſcribed within general rules, and of which the violation is naturally attended with ſome degree of re-

morſe and ſome dread of ſuffering puniſhment. The deſign of that inſtitution which gave occaſion to their works, was to appeaſe thoſe terrors of conſcience which attend upon the infringement of ſuch duties. But it is not every virtue of which the defect is accompanied with any very ſevere compunctions of this kind, and no man applies to his confeſſor for abſolution, becauſe he did not perform the moſt generous, the moſt friendly, or the moſt magnanimous action which, in his circumſtances, it was poſſible to perform. In failures of this kind, the rule that is violated is commonly not very determinate, and is generally of ſuch a nature too, that though the obſervance of it might entitle to honour and reward, the violation ſeems to expoſe to no poſitive blame, cenſure, or puniſhment. The exerciſe of ſuch virtues the caſuiſts ſeem to have regarded as a ſort of works of ſupererogation, which could not be very ſtrictly exacted, and which it was therefore unneceſſary for them to treat of.

The breaches of moral duty, therefore, which came before the tribunal of the confeſſor, and upon that account fell under the cognizance of the caſuiſts, were chiefly of three different kinds.

Firſt and principally, breaches of the rules of juſtice. The rules here are all expreſs and poſitive, and the violation of them is naturally attended with the conſciouſneſs of deſerving, and the dread of ſuffering puniſhment both from God and man.

PART VII.

Secondly, breaches of the rules of chaſtity. Theſe in all groſſer inſtances are real breaches of the rules of juſtice, and no perſon can be guilty of them without doing the moſt unpardonable injury to ſome other. In ſmaller inſtances, when they amount only to a violation of thoſe exact decorums which ought to be obſerved in the converſation of the two ſexes, they cannot indeed juſtly be conſidered as violations of the rules of juſtice. They are generally, however, violations of a pretty plain rule, and, at leaſt in one of the ſexes, tend to bring ignominy upon the perſon who has been guilty of them, and conſequently to be attended in the ſcrupulous with ſome degree of ſhame and contrition of mind.

Thirdly, breaches of the rules of veracity. The violation of truth, it is to be obſerved, is not always a breach of juſtice, though it is ſo upon many occaſions, and conſequently cannot always expoſe to any external puniſhment. The vice of common lying, though a moſt miſerable meanneſs, may frequently do hurt to nobody, and in this caſe no claim of vengeance or ſatisfaction can be due either to the perſons impoſed upon, or to others. But though the violation of truth is not always a breach of juſtice, it is always a breach of a very plain rule, and what naturally tends to cover with ſhame the perſon who has been guilty of it.

There ſeems to be in young children an inſtinctive diſpoſition to believe whatever they are told. Nature ſeems to have judged it neceſ-

ſary

ſary for their preſervation that they ſhould, for ſome time at leaſt, put implicit confidence in thoſe to whom the care of their childhood, and of the earlieſt and moſt neceſſary parts of their education, is intruſted. Their credulity, accordingly, is exceſſive, and it requires long and much experience of the falſehood of mankind to reduce them to a reaſonable degree of diffidence and diſtruſt. In grown-up people the degrees of credulity are, no doubt, very different. The wiſeſt and moſt experienced are generally the leaſt credulous. But the man ſcarce lives who is not more credulous than he ought to be, and who does not, upon many occaſions, give credit to tales, which not only turn out to be perfectly falſe, but which a very moderate degree of reflection and attention might have taught him could not well be true. The natural diſpoſition is always to believe. It is acquired wiſdom and experience only that teach incredulity, and they very ſeldom teach it enough. The wiſeſt and moſt cautious of us all frequently gives credit to ſtories which he himſelf is afterwards both aſhamed and aſtoniſhed that he could poſſibly think of believing.

The man whom we believe is neceſſarily, in the things concerning which we believe him, our leader and director, and we look up to him with a certain degree of eſteem and reſpect. But as from admiring other people we come to wiſh to be admired ourſelves; ſo from being led and directed by other people we learn to wiſh to become ourſelves leaders and directors. And

PART VII. as we cannot always be ſatisfied merely with being admired, unleſs we can at the ſame time perſuade ourſelves that we are in ſome degree really worthy of admiration; ſo we cannot always be ſatisfied merely with being believed, unleſs we are at the ſame time conſcious that we are really worthy of belief. As the deſire of praiſe and that of praiſe-worthineſs, though very much a-kin, are yet diſtinct and ſeparate deſires; ſo the deſire of being believed and that of being worthy of belief, though very much a-kin too, are equally diſtinct and ſeparate deſires.

The deſire of being believed, the deſire of perſuading, of leading and directing other people, ſeems to be one of the ſtrongeſt of all our natural deſires. It is, perhaps, the inſtinct upon which is founded the faculty of ſpeech, the characteriſtical faculty of human nature. No other animal poſſeſſes this faculty, and we cannot diſcover in any other animal any deſire to lead and direct the judgment and conduct of its fellows. Great ambition, the deſire of real ſuperiority, of leading and directing, ſeems to be altogether peculiar to man, and ſpeech is the great inſtrument of ambition, of real ſuperiority, of leading and directing the judgments and conduct of other people.

It is always mortifying not to be believed, and it is doubly ſo when we ſuſpect that it is becauſe we are ſuppoſed to be unworthy of belief and capable of ſeriouſly and wilfully deceiving. To tell a man that he lies, is of all affronts the moſt mortal. But whoever ſeriouſly and wilfully

fully deceives is neceſſarily conſcious to himſelf that he merits this affront, that he does not deſerve to be believed, and that he forfeits all title to that ſort of credit from which alone he can derive any ſort of eaſe, comfort, or ſatisfaction in the ſociety of his equals. The man who had the misfortune to imagine that nobody believed a ſingle word he ſaid, would feel himſelf the outcaſt of human ſociety, would dread the very thought of going into it, or of preſenting himſelf before it, and could ſcarce fail, I think, to die of deſpair. It is probable, however, that no man ever had juſt reaſon to entertain this humiliating opinion of himſelf. The moſt notorious liar, I am diſpoſed to believe, tells the fair truth at leaſt twenty times for once that he ſeriouſly and deliberately lies; and, as in the moſt cautious the diſpoſition to believe is apt to prevail over that to doubt and diſtruſt; ſo in thoſe who are the moſt regardleſs of truth, the natural diſpoſition to tell it prevails upon moſt occaſions over that to deceive, or in any reſpect to alter or diſguiſe it.

We are mortified when we happen to deceive other people, though unintentionally, and from having been ourſelves deceived. Though this involuntary falſehood may frequently be no mark of any want of veracity, of any want of the moſt perfect love of truth, it is always in ſome degree a mark of want of judgment, of want of memory, of improper credulity, of ſome degree of precipitancy and raſhneſs. It always diminiſhes our authority to perſuade, and always brings

PART VII.

brings ſome degree of ſuſpicion upon our fitneſs to lead and direct. The man who ſometimes miſleads from miſtake, however, is widely different from him who is capable of wilfully deceiving. The former may ſafely be truſted upon many occaſions; the latter very ſeldom upon any.

Franknefs and openneſs conciliate confidence. We truſt the man who ſeems willing to truſt us. We ſee clearly, we think, the road by which he means to conduct us, and we abandon ourſelves with pleaſure to his guidance and direction. Reſerve and concealment, on the contrary, call forth diffidence. We are afraid to follow the man who is going we do not know where. The great pleaſure of converſation and ſociety, beſides, ariſes from a certain correſpondence of ſentiments and opinions, from a certain harmony of minds, which like ſo many muſical inſtruments coincide and keep time with one another. But this moſt delightful harmony cannot be obtained unleſs there is a free communication of ſentiments and opinions. We all deſire, upon this account, to feel how each other is affected, to penetrate into each other's boſoms, and to obſerve the ſentiments and affections which really ſubſiſt there. The man who indulges us in this natural paſſion, who invites us into his heart, who, as it were, ſets open the gates of his breaſt to us, ſeems to exerciſe a ſpecies of hoſpitality more delightful than any other. No man, who is in ordinary good temper, can fail of pleaſing, if he has the courage to utter his real

real ſentiments as he feels them, and becauſe he feels them. It is this unreſerved ſincerity which renders even the prattle of a child agreeable. How weak and imperfect ſoever the views of the open-hearted, we take pleaſure to enter into them, and endeavour, as much as we can, to bring down our own underſtanding to the level of their capacities, and to regard every ſubject in the particular light in which they appear to have conſidered it. This paſſion to diſcover the real ſentiments of others is naturally ſo ſtrong, that it often degenerates into a troubleſome and impertinent curioſity to pry into thoſe ſecrets of our neighbours which they have very juſtifiable reaſons for concealing; and, upon many occaſions, it requires prudence and a ſtrong ſenſe of propriety to govern this, as well as all the other paſſions of human nature, and to reduce it to that pitch which any impartial ſpectator can approve of. To diſappoint this curioſity, however, when it is kept within proper bounds, and aims at nothing which there can be any juſt reaſon for concealing, is equally diſagreeable in its turn. The man who eludes our moſt innocent queſtions, who gives no ſatisfaction to our moſt inoffenſive inquiries, who plainly wraps himſelf up in impenetrable obſcurity, ſeems, as it were, to build a wall about his breaſt. We run forward to get within it, with all the eagerneſs of harmleſs curioſity; and feel ourſelves all at once puſhed back with the rudeſt and moſt offenſive violence.

The

PART VII.

The man of reſerve and concealment, though ſeldom a very amiable character, is not diſreſpected or deſpiſed. He ſeems to feel coldly towards us, and we feel as coldly towards him. He is not much praiſed or beloved, but he is as little hated or blamed. He very ſeldom, however, has occaſion to repent of his caution, and is generally diſpoſed rather to value himſelf upon the prudence of his reſerve. Though his conduct, therefore, may have been very faulty, and ſometimes even hurtful, he can very ſeldom be diſpoſed to lay his caſe before the caſuiſts, or to fancy that he has any occaſion for their acquittal or approbation.

It is not always ſo with the man, who, from falſe information, from inadvertency, from precipitancy and raſhneſs, has involuntarily deceived. Though it ſhould be in a matter of little conſequence, in telling a piece of common news, for example, if he is a real lover of truth, he is aſhamed of his own careleſſneſs, and never fails to embrace the firſt opportunity of making the fulleſt acknowledgments. If it is in a matter of ſome conſequence, his contrition is ſtill greater; and if any unlucky or fatal conſequence has followed from his miſinformation, he can ſcarce ever forgive himſelf. Though not guilty, he feels himſelf to be in the higheſt degree, what the ancients called, piacular, and is anxious and eager to make every ſort of atonement in his power. Such a perſon might frequently be diſpoſed to lay his caſe before the caſuiſts, who have in general been very favourable to him, and

and though they have ſometimes juſtly condemned him for raſhneſs, they have univerſally acquitted him of the ignominy of falſehood.

But the man who had the moſt frequent occaſion to conſult them, was the man of equivocation and mental reſervation, the man who ſeriouſly and deliberately meant to deceive, but who, at the ſame time, wiſhed to flatter himſelf that he had really told the truth. With him they have dealt variouſly. When they approved very much of the motives of his deceit, they have ſometimes acquitted him, though, to do them juſtice, they have in general and much more frequently condemned him.

The chief ſubjects of the works of the caſuiſts, therefore, were the conſcientious regard that is due to the rules of juſtice; how far we ought to reſpect the life and property of our neighbour; the duty of reſtitution; the laws of chaſtity and modeſty, and wherein conſiſted what, in their language, are called the ſins of concupiſcence; the rules of veracity, and the obligation of oaths, promiſes, and contracts of all kinds.

It may be ſaid in general of the works of the caſuiſts that they attempted, to no purpoſe, to direct by preciſe rules what it belongs to feeling and ſentiment only to judge of. How is it poſſible to aſcertain by rules the exact point at which, in every caſe, a delicate ſenſe of juſtice begins to run into a frivolous and weak ſcrupuloſity of conſcience? When it is that ſecrecy and reſerve begin to grow into diſſimulation? How far an agreeable irony may be carried, and at what preciſe point it begins to degenerate

into

PART VII.

into a deteſtable lie? What is the higheſt pitch of freedom and eaſe of behaviour which can be regarded as graceful and becoming, and when it is that it firſt begins to run into a negligent and thoughtleſs licentiouſneſs? With regard to all ſuch matters, what would hold good in any one caſe would ſcarce do ſo exactly in any other, and what conſtitutes the propriety and happineſs of behaviour varies in every caſe with the ſmalleſt variety of ſituation. Books of caſuiſtry, therefore, are generally as uſeleſs as they are commonly tireſome. They could be of little uſe to one who ſhould conſult them upon occaſion, even ſuppoſing their deciſions to be juſt; becauſe, notwithſtanding the multitude of caſes collected in them, yet upon account of the ſtill greater variety of poſſible circumſtances, it is a chance, if among all thoſe caſes there be found one exactly parallel to that under conſideration. One, who is really anxious to do his duty, muſt be very weak, if he can imagine that he has much occaſion for them; and with regard to one who is negligent of it, the ſtyle of thoſe writings is not ſuch as is likely to awaken him to more attention. None of them tend to animate us to what is generous and noble. None of them tend to ſoften us to what is gentle and humane. Many of them, on the contrary, tend rather to teach us to chicane with our own conſciences, and by their vain ſubtilties ſerve to authoriſe innumerable evaſive refinements with regard to the moſt eſſential articles of our duty. That frivolous accuracy which they attempted to introduce into

ſubjects

ſubjects which do not admit of it, almoſt neceſſarily betrayed them into thoſe dangerous errors, and at the ſame time rendered their works dry and diſagreeable, abounding in abſtruſe and metaphyſical diſtinctions, but incapable of exciting in the heart any of thoſe emotions which it is the principal uſe of books of morality to excite.

The two uſeful parts of moral philoſophy, therefore, are Ethics and Juriſprudence: caſuiſtry ought to be rejected altogether; and the ancient moraliſts appear to have judged much better, who, in treating of the ſame ſubjects, did not affect any ſuch nice exactneſs, but contented themſelves with deſcribing, in a general manner, what is the ſentiment upon which juſtice, modeſty, and veracity are founded, and what is the ordinary way of acting to which thoſe virtues would commonly prompt us.

Something, indeed, not unlike the doctrine of the caſuiſts, ſeems to have been attempted by ſeveral philoſophers. There is ſomething of this kind in the third book of Cicero's Offices, where he endeavours like a caſuiſt to give rules for our conduct in many nice caſes, in which it is difficult to determine whereabouts the point of propriety may lie. It appears too, from many paſſages in the ſame book, that ſeveral other philoſophers had attempted ſomething of the ſame kind before him. Neither he nor they, however, appear to have aimed at giving a complete ſyſtem of this ſort, but only meant to ſhow how ſituations may occur, in which it is doubtful,

PART VII.

ful, whether the highest propriety of conduct consists in observing or in receding from what, in ordinary cases, are the rules of duty.

Every system of positive law may be regarded as a more or less imperfect attempt towards a system of natural jurisprudence, or towards an enumeration of the particular rules of justice. As the violation of justice is what men will never submit to from one another, the public magistrate is under a necessity of employing the power of the commonwealth to enforce the practice of this virtue. Without this precaution, civil society would become a scene of bloodshed and disorder, every man revenging himself at his own hand whenever be fancied he was injured. To prevent the confusion which would attend upon every man's doing justice to himself, the magistrate, in all governments that have acquired any considerable authority, undertakes to do justice to all, and promises to hear and to redress every complaint of injury. In all well-governed states too, not only judges are appointed for determining the controversies of individuals, but rules are prescribed for regulating the decisions of those judges; and these rules are, in general, intended to coincide with those of natural justice. It does not, indeed, always happen that they do so in every instance. Sometimes what is called the constitution of the state, that is, the interest of the government; sometimes the interest of particular orders of men who tyrannize the government, warp the positive laws of the country from what natural justice

juſtice would preſcribe. In ſome countries, the rudeneſs and barbariſm of the people hinder the natural ſentiments of juſtice from arriving at that accuracy and preciſion which, in more civilized nations, they naturally attain to. Their laws are, like their manners, groſs and rude and undiſtinguiſhing. In other countries the unfortunate conſtitution of their courts of judicature hinders any regular ſyſtem of juriſprudence from ever eſtabliſhing itſelf among them, though the improved manners of the people may be ſuch as would admit of the moſt accurate. In no country do the deciſions of poſitive law coincide exactly, in every caſe, with the rules which the natural ſenſe of juſtice would dictate. Syſtems of poſitive law, therefore, though they deſerve the greateſt authority, as the records of the ſentiments of mankind in different ages and nations, yet can never be regarded as accurate ſyſtems of the rules of natural juſtice.

It might have been expected that the reaſonings of lawyers, upon the different imperfections and improvements of the laws of different countries, ſhould have given occaſion to an inquiry into what were the natural rules of juſtice independent of all poſitive inſtitution. It might have been expected that theſe reaſonings ſhould have led them to aim at eſtabliſhing a ſyſtem of what might properly be called natural juriſprudence, or a theory of the general principles which ought to run through and be the foundation of the laws of all nations. But though the

PART VII. reasonings of lawyers did produce something of this kind, and though no man has treated systematically of the laws of any particular country, without intermixing in his work many observations of this sort; it was very late in the world before any such general system was thought of, or before the philosophy of law was treated of by itself, and without regard to the particular institutions of any one nation. In none of the ancient moralists, do we find any attempt towards a particular enumeration of the rules of justice. Cicero in his Offices, and Aristotle in his Ethics, treat of justice in the same general manner in which they treat of all the other virtues. In the laws of Cicero and Plato, where we might naturally have expected some attempts towards an enumeration of those rules of natural equity, which ought to be enforced by the positive laws of every country, there is, however, nothing of this kind. Their laws are laws of police, not of justice. Grotius seems to have been the first who attempted to give the world any thing like a system of those principles which ought to run through, and be the foundation of the laws of all nations; and his treatise of the laws of war and peace, with all its imperfections, is perhaps at this day the most complete work that has yet been given upon this subject. I shall in another discourse endeavour to give an account of the general principles of law and government, and of the different revolutions they have undergone in the different ages and periods of society, not only in

in what concerns juſtice, but in what concerns police, revenue, and arms, and whatever elſe is the object of law. I ſhall not, therefore, at preſent enter into any further detail concerning the hiſtory of juriſprudence.

SECT. IV.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

Strahan and Preſton,
Printers-Street, London